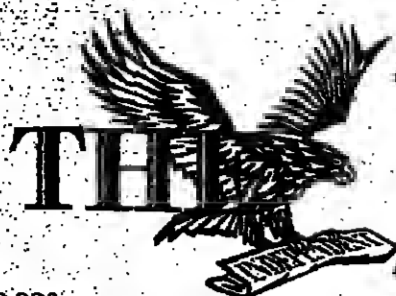


SATURDAY

Gestures that changed the world
From Jarvis to Gazza

Win Damon Hill's
Renault Spider

Terrell: a big man is back



THE INDEPENDENT

No 2,980

9 MARCH 1996

50p

£20 off mortgages; high street sales healthy; house prices on an upward trend; jobless total falling; inflation record best for half a century, but...

Where's the feelgood factor?

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Britain's homeowners received a substantial boost as the Chancellor of the Exchequer reduced the cost of borrowing yesterday for the third time in four months. The cut triggered another salvo in the escalating mortgage price war.

Jubilant Tories with an eye on the general election predicted a return of the feelgood factor after the Chancellor cut base rates by a further quarter of 1 per cent, to 6 per cent.

Kenneth Clarke forecast a bumper year for business, insisting that running the economy properly was a key way of rallying public support behind the Conservatives.

His buoyancy underlined the

Government's optimism that the economy will turn out to be an electoral asset, thanks to a tide of helpful figures - a view backed by a Labour peer, the eminent economist Lord Desai. The housing market has started showing signs of recovery, retail sales are climbing, unemployment is steadily declining and inflation has been lower for longer than at any time since 1948.

Mr Clarke is confident that he will be able to reap the benefits of low inflation and steady growth. But even if the headline numbers continue to be so favourable, which other economists still doubt, they will not necessarily deliver success in the polling booths.

A "feel-a-bit-better" factor, against a background of job

insecurity and high levels of debt, of renewed decline in manufacturing and falling investment, is unlikely to translate into votes in the same way as "feel good" factor.

Yesterday's fall in home loan costs will help a bit. Britain's two biggest lenders, the Halifax and Abbey National, followed by others, swiftly announced mortgage rate cuts that will save borrowers between £7 and £20 a month on an average £50,000 loan.

There are more cuts to come. The Nationwide, which recently undercut most other lenders in order to demonstrate the

benefits of remaining a mutual society, said it would respond with a further reduction. Its 6.99 per cent variable mortgage rate remains below the rate of 7.24 per cent most societies announced yesterday.

Mr Clarke decided to cut base rates again because inflationary pressures have continued to recede. His chance came after the Bank of England said recently that the Government was likely to meet its 2.5 per cent inflation target.

The reduction yesterday morning, after the Chancellor's Thursday afternoon meeting with the Governor of the

Bank of England, Eddie George, looks at odds with recent signs that the housing market and consumer spending were already recovering. However, in a sign of the diverging fortunes of Britain's "dual" economy, the latest figures show manufacturing output in decline, a fall in investment spending by industry and a sharp slowdown in export growth.

Businesses therefore welcomed yesterday's cut in interest rates, with some immediately calling for another, if the economy's slowdown continued. Yet financial markets

were lukewarm about the move. Share prices dived after news of astonishingly strong job creation in the US last month destroyed widespread hopes that American interest rates would fall, helping sustain the downward trend here.

City analysts are divided between those who think the Chancellor will push base rates even lower regardless and those who fear he is engineering an upturn which will force him to increase them later this year.

Interviewed by ITN, Mr Clarke contradicted the economic forecasters who are arguing that interest rates will have to rise again later in the year - a development that could militate against the Government leaving the election to the last possible date of May next year.

The Chancellor insisted: "Consumer spending is going to grow this year because we are going to have more money in their pockets, real money, not money the economy cannot afford. Money that's come because of all the measures that we have taken over the last three or four years."

He is right as far as this goes. But the Government can not expect much credit for narrow successes with some aspects of the economy when voters' lack faith in the wider framework of its policies for jobs and industry.

Here is the dilemma for the Government: good news for the consumer is irrelevant in an atmosphere of industrial decline and job insecurity.

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Ministers to rebel on divorce Bill

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

Three senior ministers are planning to vote against the two key planks in Lord Mackay's divorce reforms, causing serious embarrassment to the Government over the already troubled proposals.

The two issues at the centre of the controversy are the introduction of the "no fault" divorce and a minimum 12-month cooling-off period.

A Government source said John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, Ann Widdecombe, Minister of State at the Home Office and Michael Ancram, Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office, were expected to oppose the Government when so-called "conscience" clauses on the two issues in the Family Law Bill reach the Commons. Such a high-profile protest would boost the opposition campaign, orchestrated by former Cabinet ministers John Redwood and John Patten and a substantial section of the Tory backbench.

All three ministers have strong religious connections. Mr Gummer and Miss Widdecombe both left the Anglican Church to become Roman Catholics over the issue of women priests. Mr Ancram attended Ampleforth College, the Catholic public school, and married a member of the Fitzalan Howard family headed by the country's leading establishment Catholic, the Duke of Norfolk.

The Bill, with its "no fault" clause and cut in the minimum waiting period for a divorce

from a possible five years to one, is set to begin its Commons stages before Easter. It still has to clear a Tory rebellion at Monday's Lords Third Reading, when Lady Young, the former Conservative minister, will press for a vote to increase the period of "reflection and consideration" from 12 months to 18.

In order to ensure that a coherent Bill emerges from the Commons, the Government is expected to adopt a procedure similar to that used during the 1990 Abortion Bill. That is likely to mean the Second and Third Readings are "whipped" - with Tory MPs being expected to vote with the Government. But free votes on issues of conscience, such as the retention of fault and the waiting time, would be taken on the floor of the House as part of the Bill's Committee Stage.

The device is calculated to enable the Government to get the Bill passed without being forced to rely on Labour during the principal stages. While Government business managers would hope for support throughout of the entire "payroll vote" from ministers and parliamentary private secretaries, the odds are not good.

Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, who introduced the Bill, said yesterday: "I am concerned that any extension in this minimum period for obtaining a divorce may unnecessarily increase the trauma for children involved in the divorce process, for whom a year can seem a very long time." Lord Mackay has come under severe attack from Government colleagues for insisting on bringing in the Bill.



Blooming marvellous: Arthur Ball, from Barnham Nurseries, Newton Abbot, Devon, unwrapping one of his Cymbidium hybrids for the annual orchid show which opens today at the Royal Horticultural Society Hall, Westminster

Sober teens shun rebellion

GLENDIA COOPER

Today's teenagers are unlikely to be storming the barricades to demand their rights, according to a new survey commissioned by Barnardo's. Instead, they think the legal age for marriage should be raised to 18, see a good education as essential and want to see the death penalty restored.

In one of the most comprehensive surveys ever of young people's attitudes, it emerges that rather than rebelling against their parents, teenagers respect adults' points of view. More than nine out of ten young people believe parents should have a say in what is taught in schools. And six out of ten believe that sex education for under-12s should be at the discretion of their parents.

Three-quarters think that being well-educated is "essential" or "very important". Formal exams are seen as the best way of judging ability by nearly half and 80 per cent feel that publishing exam results of secondary schools is useful for parents.

Even so, 57 per cent worry about getting a job at the end of their education.

Tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime, young people think that reducing poverty would be an effective way of dealing with it, along with more discipline in school and in families.

More than 60 per cent think that the courts should be able to sentence murderers to death.

Even at the younger end of the scale, there is deep suspicion of the fairness of the justice system in Britain today. Given a scenario in which two people appeared in court charged with an offence they did not commit, 44 per cent thought that an Afro-

Caribbean was more likely to be found guilty than someone white and 64 per cent felt that a poor person was more likely to be found guilty than someone rich.

The survey, in which 12 to 19-year-olds were interviewed about race, gender, crime, morality and politics, discovered that they were clearer on what they thought of God than what they thought of politics. While a quarter said that they did not know how they would vote, nearly 60 per cent said they believed in God.

But this generation at least seem more committed to equality than those which went before. They believe in living together before and as an alternative to marriage, and think that a single parent can bring up a child just as well as two.

Saturday story, page 17

Girl, 10, found in squalor with dying father

PETER VICTOR

Social workers left a 10-year-old girl in appalling conditions to care for her dying father, it was claimed yesterday. The child had been struggling to cope in horrendous conditions for weeks before social services acted.

The girl's plight only came to light when she told a children's home worker, Peggy Calder, what was happening when they met at a disco organised to raise funds for the home.

Ms Calder, 46, who works at a children's home in Skegness, Lincolnshire, decided to investigate and was appalled by what

she found. "I went to the house with her and I couldn't believe my eyes - I could have cried," she said. "I have never seen anything like it."

There was a dead guinea pig and a dead bird in their cages in the kitchen and there were hundreds of maggots in the bottoms of the cages. The house was knee-deep in all manner of things. You needed a gas mask.

"There were hundreds and hundreds of mouse droppings under the sink. She told me they had been having a lot of trouble with mice and she had been trying to trap them in the oven."

It was not until weeks later that the child's 59-year-old father

was eventually admitted to hospital dying of lung cancer. The girl's parents were divorced seven years ago. Her mother, who knew nothing of her daughter's plight, is now re-married and living with her new family in Kent.

Ms Calder said the girl, who had scabies, was starving because her father, who gave up his factory job and was bedridden, was too ill to cook for her. "She told me she was doing her best but had run out of recipe ideas. That is from a 10-year-old. It was heartbreaking."

Ms Calder said she approached social services immediately but heard nothing

from them so over a week later she took matters into her own hands and escorted the child to the Skegness office. "Then they went to the house to offer some help but her father refused because he was scared she would be taken away from him."

A social worker called later and told me they could do nothing because they couldn't go barging into people's houses where they weren't wanted. "But they didn't do anything else after that. I went down a third time, but they didn't want to know. I was given an emergency number but I got absolutely nothing from that either." In the end, Ms Calder

phoned the police and arranged for an ambulance for the girl's father.

Lincolnshire Social Services area manager, Norman Picher, claimed social workers acted quickly to assist the family. "As soon as we were aware of the situation we attended and offered our services but they were refused," he said.

"But we are trying to work with the family as we always do rather than just stepping in and taking over."

The girl is now living at the Derbyshire Children's Home in Skegness and Ms Calder has begun legal proceedings to adopt her.

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The feelgood factor: Homeowners staying put as lack of job security blamed for continued property slump

Confidence still fragile in housing market

WILL BENNETT and CLARE GARNER

Alex Centro finds it easier to sell expensive properties in north and west London than he does those at the lower end of the market. Confidence among buyers with modest incomes is still very fragile.

Despite yesterday's cut in the interest rate - the third in the past four months - and last month's 0.9 per cent rise in house prices, many buyers are still too worried about job security to venture into the property market.

Mr Centro, sales manager for Oakleys estate agents, said: "It is not interest rates which are the problem, it is job security. People are not going to commit themselves to a 25-year mortgage when they have only got a job contract for one year."

"Things are improving slowly but surely. The top end of the market is going pretty well and we are looking for more property to sell at that end, while the less highly valued areas are more difficult."

Throughout the economy, the picture is one of a cautious recovery, with people being

choosy about what they buy and both families and businesses very wary of committing themselves to bigger outgoings.

Jonathan Bastable, of Burrough & Company, an estate agents in Newbury, Berkshire, said: "I don't think you can say interest rate cut, therefore improvement in the property market."

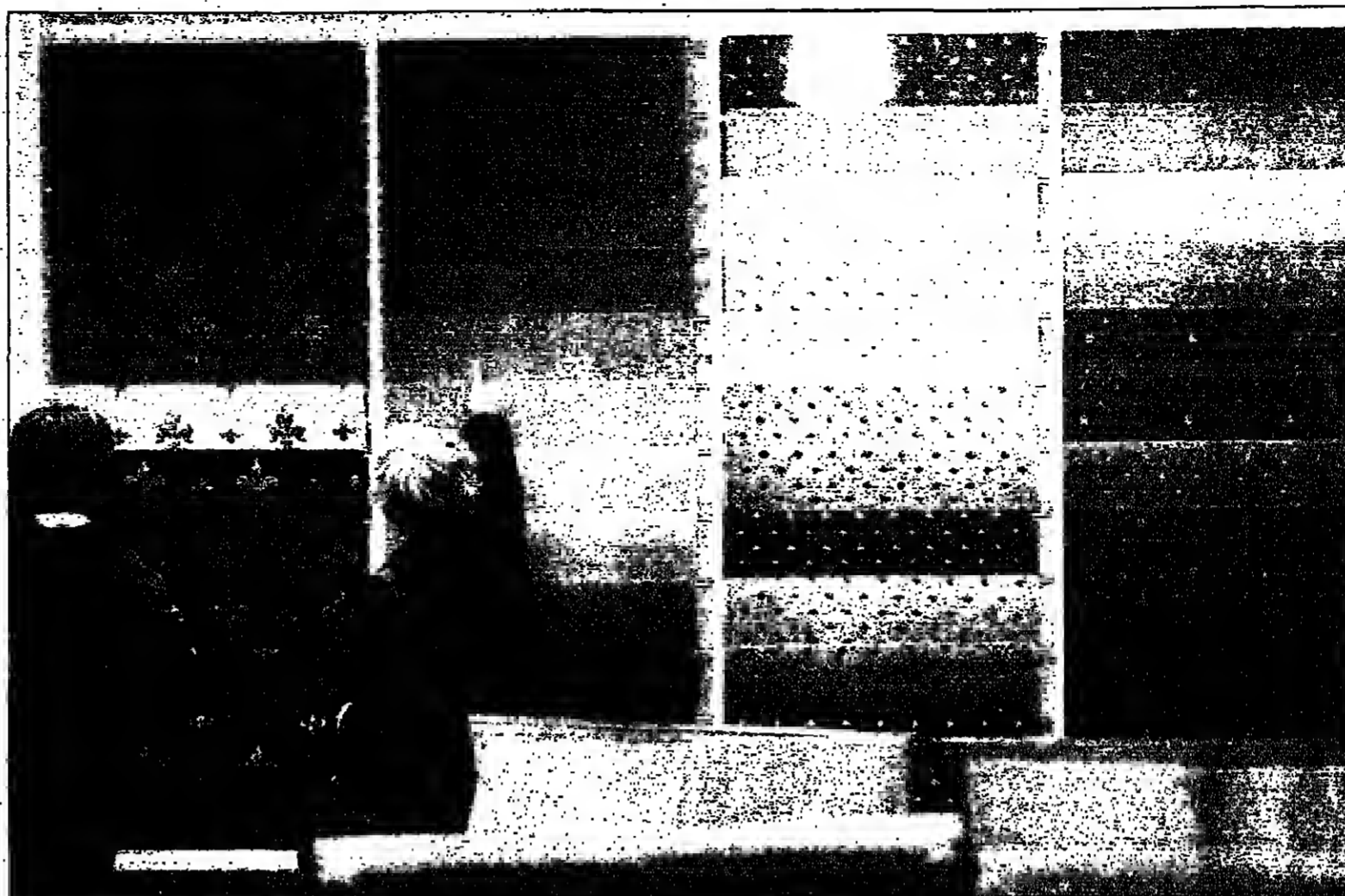
"But it will have a cumulative effect on property values and increase confidence."

"A quarter of 1 per cent off interest rates does not mean a dramatic difference, it is just a continuation of the general improvement in the market that has been going on around Newbury for 18 months to two years now."

A spokesman for Dixons, the electrical goods group, said: "The interest rate cut is not likely to have any immediate effect on sales."

"In the longer term it might stimulate sales if the housing market was to pick up. However, consumers are spending selectively and there is no evidence of a feelgood factor along the lines of that experienced in the 1980s."

The department store chain



Carpet-baggers: Shoppers in Peter Jones, London. Householders are choosing to invest in existing homes, rather than moving. Photograph: John Voos

John Lewis, which sells many household furnishings, reported a 9 per cent increase in sales last year and believes that that confidence is slowly starting to return to the High Street.

Stuart Hampson, the company chairman, said: "The early years of this decade caused

us real pain as the property sector went into decline, but in this third year of profit growth we have felt distinct signs that customers are feeling more confidence and are getting back to investing in their homes."

"What we are seeing now is no repeat of the 1980s but the

property market does seem to be on the move again. Some people are finding it suits them well to take rented houses rather than buying... and more people are able and willing to invest in their existing homes instead of moving."

But the rate cut was greeted

without much enthusiasm by shoppers yesterday. Carolyn Putter, a teacher and mother of two from Newbury, said: "I suppose it is a move in the right direction but I would think there have got to be more significant moves in the right direction for it to take effect."

Belinda White, a pensioner from Marlborough, Wiltshire, said: "I think it is awful news. I am living on my investments. Our investments go lower and lower and all our bills go up and up."

"Quite honestly, I think the Government ought to go."

Signs of encouragement for optimistic Chancellor

Consumer spending has grown more slowly during the 1990s than at any time since before the First World War. Even during the depression of the 1930s there were years when people could increase their spending at a faster rate than they have during this "feel-good" decade.

Chancellor Kenneth Clarke faces an uphill struggle to restore some feelgood to the economy before the general election. But there are signs of an improving housing market, whose collapse made a profound contribution to Britain's loss of economic morale.

There is growing evidence that the three reductions in the level of base rates since December combined with the mortgage price war have started to help the housing market recover. The rise in house prices last month was the biggest for

two years and the seventh in succession, the Halifax building society reported this week. For the first time since the beginning of 1993, house prices were higher than they had been a year earlier. This followed reports of an increasing house sales and higher mortgage borrowing.

Up to a million and a half people remain trapped by negative equity thanks to the drop in house prices since the 1989 peak. But experts estimate that it would not take a big increase in prices to whittle these numbers away. Prices rising at an annual rate of 3-4 per cent would almost eliminate negative equity within two years.

Gary Marshall, chief economist at the Halifax, expected exactly this sort of steady recovery. "The housing market will not be like the 1980s but it will get on to a more even keel. A more stable economy makes for a more stable housing market," he said. But he adds that the psychological scars of the market's collapse will be only gradually erased.

There are those who believe Britain is poised for another boom. David Miles, Professor of Finance at Imperial College, London, argued: "The pent-up demand will be released as soon as people become convinced that we have gone past the bottom. There is a reasonable chance of a very powerful upswing in house prices."

However, it would come too late to help the Chancellor. "We could see a very strong 1997 and 1998," Prof Miles said. "Like the building society windfalls, it

will happen the other side of the election."

Share handouts from building societies - which will total about £15bn by the end of 1997 - are one reason most economists join Mr Clarke in predicting an increase in consumer spending. Consumers are also expected to spend some of the proceeds from maturing Tassas, estimated at around £45bn this year and next. The rebate on electricity bills and income tax cuts that take effect in April will be the icing on the cake.

There are already signs that spending is picking up. Official figures showed that retail sales volumes showed in January, but trends are leading upwards. A CBI survey this week revealed firm sales on the high street in February, alongside a surge in optimism among retailers.

Most forecasts for 1996 pre-

dict that there will be enough of an increase in spending compared with last year to offset weakness in exports and investment, which were disappointing in late 1995. Although few are as optimistic as the Chancellor, most think the economy can grow at about its long run trend rate - or Mr Clarke's "sustainable rate".

Leo Doyle, an economist at City Investment Bank Kleinwort Benson, cautions that the

improvement in spending looks good only by comparison with earlier weakness. "Cautious spending of windfalls does not make people feel good in the same way as solid increases in their incomes," he said. "Job insecurity will make it hard to engineer a return of the feel-good factor."

The financial markets feel that further reductions in the cost of borrowing would involve running risks with inflation, so

the Government may not be able to engineer a feelgood factor before the election. "If people feel good, Kenneth Clarke will have gone too far," said Geoffrey Dicks, a City economist at NatWest Markets. "It takes 20 per cent growth in house prices and huge increases in consumer spending to make us happy. If you have that kind of party there is always a hangover."

Diane Coyle

It's never been easier to borrow

CLIFFORD GERMAN
Personal Finance Editor

The steady downward pressure on interest rates has cut borrowing rates to their lowest levels in a quarter of a century. The main lenders have cut standard variable rates to 7.24 per cent, but borrowers can easily pick up loans at rates well below that.

Bradford & Bingley Direct, who offer mortgages over the phone, are already down to a standard variable rate of 6.25 per cent with no hidden extras to good credit risks. Scarborough Building Society is offering fixed-rate loans at 0.25 per cent for a year, and the Portsmouth Building Society chipped in yesterday by offering fixed rates

What you save with the new rate			
Mortgage	Old rate 7.45%	New rate 7.25%	Difference
£30,000	£202.44	£198.61	£3.83
£40,000	£270.70	£265.34	£5.36
£50,000	£345.40	£338.46	£6.94
£60,000	£420.09	£411.59	£8.50
£70,000	£494.78	£484.72	£10.06
£80,000	£569.48	£557.94	£11.54
£90,000	£644.17	£630.97	£13.20
£100,000	£718.86	£704.10	£14.76

Figures for 25-year repayment mortgage. Source: Halifax BS

of just 4.99 per cent until May 1998.

Cheap mortgages are good news for home-owners, but as base rates fall savers have seen their income from traditional savings halved in less than two

years. The Halifax were already offering savers just 2.75 per cent before tax on small sums of £500 in instant access deposits.

Investors willing to give 60 to 90 days notice to withdraw

money could expect only 3.25 to 3.40 per cent on sums of £1,000 before yesterday, and savings rates seem certain to fall by around 0.25 per cent in the next few weeks.

Savers who have taken out new Tax-Exempt Savings Accounts in recent weeks are also in for a shock. The best interest rates on fixed-rate Tassas are as high as 7.25 per cent, but most of these offers will be withdrawn within the next seven days.

Investors can still get 6 per cent tax-free by investing in Personal Equity Plans (PEPs) and up to 10 per cent tax-free in Corporate Bond PEPs, but there has to be a possibility that capital values on these investments can go down as well as up.

End of the road: AC Cobra and Renault Five to cease production

Driving off into the sunset...

PETER VICTOR and MARY DEJEVSKY

Two motoring legends - the historic AC Car company and the Gallic Renault Five - were consigned to history yesterday.

The much-loved French runabout, which inspired a generation of hatchback cars, ceases production this summer after 24 years as the company's best seller. Surrey-based AC Cars, founded in 1901 and one of Britain's oldest car companies, will disappear into receivership. Accountants Price Waterhouse said it had been appointed administrative receivers to AC Cars and its parent company Autokraft Ltd.

AC Cars is based on the site of the former Brooklands race circuit near Weybridge in Surrey and has about 90 staff. It currently makes the £36,000 AC Ace.

A link-up with Texan millionaire Carroll Shelby led to the



Brute power: AC Cobra



Design item: Renault Five

creation of the first race-bred Cobra in the early 1960s.

It was widely regarded by enthusiasts as the ultimate "muscle car"; its hooded snake badge the last word in macho motoring. According to legend, grown men screamed when exposed for the first time to its brute power and fierce acceleration.

So keen are enthusiasts to own the legendary car that several kit car manufacturers make replicas of the Cobra retailing at up to £40,000.

Current AC boss Brian Angliss took over the business in 1986. A year later, car giant

Ford took a 50.9% stake in the company. The partnership proved an uneasy one and eventually Mr Angliss was allowed to buy out Ford's share.

By October 1993, AC Cars was able to show off the Ace car, having already produced the Cobra Mark IV. But cash difficulties have now arisen and the company needs to team up with a financially-secure partner.

Mike Gercke, one of the receivers said yesterday: "Production is continuing while the receivers seek buyers for the business as a going concern. No one has been laid off and we are

confident that a strong partner can be found for the company."

By comparison the end of the Renault Five will inspire bitter-sweet memories rather than fanaticism. A last series of Fives, a limited run of 12,000 - named the "Bye-bye" - will be the model's swan-song.

More than 9 million Fives have been sold since production began in 1972. It came into its own with the oil crisis, subsequently acquiring the sleeker, more stylish lines that facilitated its graduation into "Le Car" and the "Supercar", a design item of the Eighties.

Renault says the car is being phased out because it is outdated and no longer commercial. Since the replacement - the Twingo, darling of the Paris smart set - will not be sold here, British fans of the Five will have to be satisfied with the "Bye-bye". The name has annoyed the French so much that there may be enough to go round.

Saddam Hussein has Fide chess men in cheque

WILLIAM HARTSTON
Chess Correspondent

After a year of negotiations and preparation, the International Chess Federation (Fide) has found a sponsor for its world-championship match between Anatoly Karpov and Gata Kamsky. It will be in Baghdad, with President Saddam Hussein guaranteeing a \$2m (£1.3m) prize fund and performing the opening ceremony when the battle begins in June.

It brings new hope of recognition to a regime shattered by years of war, starved of international investment through its own internal conflicts and the unpredictable decisions of its autocratic leadership. Iraq has had problems too, but over recent years has been relatively peaceful compared with the world of chess.

Fide's problems came to a head in 1993 when Garry Kasparov and Nigel Short broke away to found the Professional Chess Association (PCA) and take their world title match away from Fide. This resulted in two rival championship contests, with Anatoly Karpov winning the Fide crown, while Kasparov took the PCA version. Both organisations found it increasingly difficult to attract and maintain sponsorship: Fide lacked the strongest player in the world, while the PCA lacked the official sanction of the world governing body.

In 1994, Fide's president, Florencio Campomanes, was re-elected on a platform promising to reunify the titles. A year later, however, he had neither delivered a peace treaty nor found an organiser for the Karpov-Kamsky world-title match.

In January, Campomanes was replaced by Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, 33, the millionaire President of Kalmykia, an oil-rich republic within Russia. He has taken some extraordinary decisions, the most controversial of which, before the Baghdad bombshell, was to replace the three-year world championship cycle and gladiatorial title matches with a single annual knock-out tournament lasting a couple of weeks.

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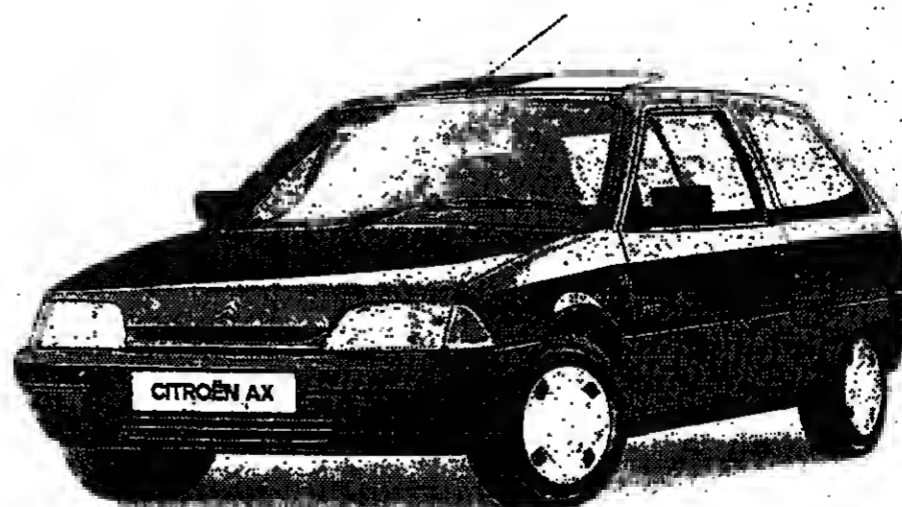
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Since then, however, some MPs have compared her un-

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Down to Earth: Rogue satellite will crash from the skies at midday on 12 March (give or take 18 hours), says amateur expert

Retired teacher solves Chinese space puzzle

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

A rogue Chinese satellite is expected to crash to Earth early next week, and some of the best people in the field are tracking its unpredictable downward spiral. They include the US Space Command, the European Space Agency (ESA), the UK Defence Research Agency and Geoffrey Perry, of course.

Judging by his track record, Mr Perry – a retired physics teacher now living in Cornwall – probably has the most accurate prediction for the satellite's eventual landing time. "Midday on the 12th of March [Tuesday], plus or minus 18 hours," he told *The Independent* yesterday. By contrast, ESA's latest official estimate is 4am on the 12th – plus or minus 24 hours.

Mr Perry's relies on long experience and superior techniques. He observes satellites at dusk, sitting in his garden with binoculars and a stopwatch, and listens in to their radio bleeps from his home. Explaining his latest forecast, he said: "I get US radar data which is collected by Fylingdales. I take

the last six sets of data, fit a parabola to them, calculate the rate of decay, correct for the semi-annual variation, and add that to the date. Perfectly straightforward."

Mr Perry's experience pre-dates the ESA, and spans more than 30 years. For much of that time he taught at Kettering Grammar School for Boys where he found the dawning of the space age provided a means of fascinating pupils – and of scooping the rest of the world.

In 1966, using £25 worth of radio equipment, he and his pupils noticed that some of the newly launched Soviet satellites had a different orbit from others. From that, they deduced that the Soviets were using a new launch site – a fact the USSR would only admit to publicly twenty years later.

In December 1973 they tracked the successful landing of Soyuz-13 and issued their data, which was precise and correct, to the world an hour before the Soviets. "Things like that fire kids' imaginations," he recalled yesterday at his home in Bude. "I remember one of them saying, 'It beats pouring iron filings over a magnet, or

putting hot rivets into a calorimeter."

The grammar school has since closed, but Mr Perry, now 68, has managed to keep alive the principle of the "Kettering Group" – as it became known. A worldwide network of amateur observers have been in touch for years, swapping information by telephone, fax and now e-mail.

His inspirational methods also run in the family. His daughter is now the head of physics at Malvern Girls' School – encouraging pupils to follow the satellite's downward path.



Star gazer: Geoffrey Perry uses scientific data, and a good old-fashioned pair of binoculars, to monitor the satellite from his home in Cornwall

Danger in the sunny skies

Britain has received more harmful ultraviolet B (UVB) radiation this week than nature intended, thanks to man-made damage to the high altitude ozone layer.

The ozone, a gas made of three oxygen atoms, forms a protective shield against the UVB streaming towards the Earth in the Sun's rays. We know that high levels of UVB cause non-melanoma skin cancer and there is solid evidence UVB radiation can damage wild plants, crop plants and plankton in the sea – all of them at the base of food chains.

So is mankind's damage to the tenuous ozone layer, caused by chlorofluorocarbons and other industrial compounds, actually allowing more UVB to reach the Earth's surface? And what harm is being done?

The answer to the first question is yes, but there is no clear answer to the second, so far. Fortunately, the worst ozone destruction seen to date takes place in places and at a time of the year when it is least likely to do damage – in the springs of both the southern and northern hemispheres and in the unpopulated polar regions.

Nonetheless, University of California scientists have reported that in the Antarctic extra UVB pouring through the ozone hole knocks back the plankton. Ozone-depleted air has also drifted over the populated tip of South America.

Nicholas Schoon reports on the threat caused by the record holes in the ozone layer

Marked ozone depletion takes place over the Arctic, too, allowing more UVB to reach populated zones such as Scandinavia, Alaska and northern Russia and Canada – and, over the past few days – Britain.

But, from a human point of view, winter is the best time for this to happen. The Sun is low in the sky, it is often cloudy, people spend most of their time indoors and when they do go out they are usually wrapped up. People get exposed to much more UVB in summer, irrespective of ozone damage.

But scientists, including Colin Driscoll, head of the optical radiation group at the Government's National Radiological Protection Board, say that ozone depletion is a real concern. Any pollution which changes the global atmosphere letting through harmful radiation has to be taken seriously.

The ozone layer should begin to repair itself around 2000, thanks to international treaties curbing CFCs and other chemicals. But it will not be until the middle of the next century when the Antarctic ozone holes, the largest to date, disappear.

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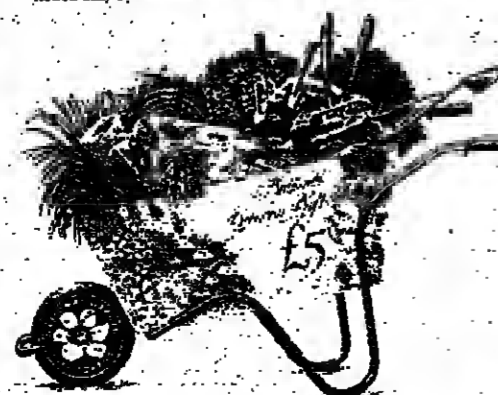
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news

Pigeon pilferer lights on pie in the sky

Vanishing birds: Gastronomic theory behind mystery raider's clean-up of Trafalgar Square

PAUL FIELD

They carry diseases including meningitis and gastro-enteritis and, with the exception of those in the royal parks, are classified as pests. So some would say the pigeon snatcher, who has swiped around 1,000 of the world famous birds from Trafalgar Square, is public spirited and should be applauded.

The culprit, who is white, in his twenties and wears blue overalls and a red baseball cap, has for the past month, up to three times a week, raided the London landmark. On the last two raids, including last Tuesday, he had an accomplice.

Bernie Rayner, a licensed seed seller, watched in astonishment as the man used food to lure the pigeons towards a box on which he was sitting. His escape route was via Charing Cross Tube station. "There are around 4,000 pigeons here," he said. "I reckon a quarter of them have gone in the last few weeks."

"I challenged him and he claimed he was a member of a pigeon racing club in Peckham and they were for competition. But they are too old and out of condition for racing."

Police and officials from the Heritage Department, which is responsible for Trafalgar Square, told the snatcher he could face prosecution under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. He could not be arrested because pinching pigeons is not theft - there are no constraints on their flight paths.

However, the man laughed off the warnings and a Scotland Yard source admitted it was unlikely that legal action could be brought. Roy Riggs, the officer who confronted the pilferer,

said: "There is a strong suspicion these pigeons are ending up in pies rather than in races. They are probably being sold to Greek restaurants as they are some sort of delicacy out there."

But the theory of the pie man cometh seems to have little credence. Michael Frangos, owner of Beotys restaurant in Covent Garden, raised doubts. "The Greeks and Cypriots do love pigeons as well as partridges, pheasants and thrushes but they are cooked over charcoal with lemon juice, never put into pies. Few Greek restaurants here would serve pigeon."

Keith Floyd, the television chef, said: "Pigeons are notoriously tough so I would take the trouble and money to order imported pigeons. They need to be plump, well rounded with a smooth skin."

The feathered inhabitants of Trafalgar Square, on the other hand, are plump, but oddly shaped with a rough skin, often covered in their own excrement. If eaten, even when cooked in a sauce with a well glazed crust, they are likely to make people very ill.

Westminster council warns people not to feed them because of the health risks. Three years ago the council tried putting pigeons on the pill by lacing food with contraceptives.

However, the Heritage Department, which spends £100,000 a year cleaning Trafalgar Square, refused to be drawn on whether the snatcher was doing the site a favour. Spokesman Flavie Higgins said: "They do create a lot of mess but we consider them to be a tourist attraction. It would not be Trafalgar Square without them."



Bird brain: A pigeon rests on a statue in Trafalgar Square where a mystery man has snatched 1,000 birds in a month. Photograph: Lynn Ferguson

Skye bridge toll is 'lawful'

The controversial tolls for crossing the Skye bridge are lawful, a court ruled yesterday.

Sheriff James Fraser rejected the argument of protesters charged with alleged non-payment of the £4.30 toll as some 70 protesters packed the tiny courtroom in Dingwall, Highland, to hear his ruling on legal arguments against the charge.

The group, led by a piper and carrying banners and waving flags, had marched to the courthouse through the town.

Neil Murray QC, for the 180 people facing charges of non-payment of the £4.30 toll, had earlier argued that the charge was incompetent under several statutory rules. He claimed the New Roads and Streets Act 1991, under which the tolls were charged, was contrary to the 1707 Treaty of Union and also argued that the Secretary of State for Scotland was acting beyond his powers in introducing the toll order in 1992.

Sheriff Fraser ruled in favour of the Crown in test cases against three of the accused, and refused the defence immediate right to appeal.

Following a short adjournment the court then read the names of all 184 accused, with the majority maintaining their not guilty pleas. The trial of the first, George Anderson, will take place on 11 April.

Breeders get the bird

The lucrative business of ostrich farming came out of the farmyard yesterday when one breeder started a High Court action, accusing another of copying its methods.

The Ostrich Breeding Corporation and Ostrich Farming Corporation, set up in 1986, are suing the Ostrich Breeding Company, which began trading 18 months ago.

Robin Higgins, spokesman for the two corporations, based in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, said the company, which is based in Swansea, was mimicking their offers and publicity.

Ostrich meat - with the taste of fillet steak and less fat than fish - is being hailed as the dish of the future. Supporters claim it will be as cheap and plentiful as turkey within 10 years.

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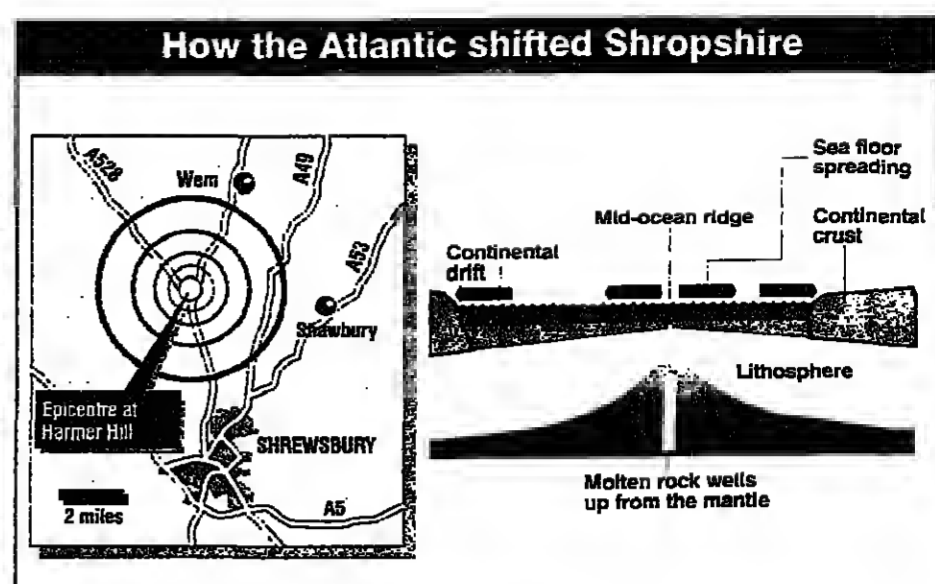
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"It's early days, but if they give the go-ahead we could

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CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

Electronic cash could become widespread in the UK from next year, after the credit card giant Visa confirmed it was talking to banks about introducing "electronic purses" to the high street.

Retailers warned that the new system would have to be both cheap and cause the minimum of disruption. But the news was seen as a welcome boost by those in the "electronic cash" industry, which has been gaining momentum in the past few years.

The "purses" would consist of a microchip embedded in a credit card-sized model, known as a "stored value card". These store money in the form of encrypted electronic digits in the chip's memory, and can be used like cash to make purchases. The transaction is completed by swiping them through a card-reader in a store, which transfers the "cash" to the store's computer.

Visa is understood to be talking to Barclays, Lloyds, the Halifax, Abbey National and a number of other high street banks. "Six members of the Visa consortium in the UK have asked to evaluate a stored value card programme," said a Visa spokesman yesterday.

"It's early days, but if they give the go-ahead we could have them operating in Britain next year."

The new system would be a direct challenge to the Mondex electronic cash scheme, which has been tested in a public pilot scheme in Swindon. Whitestone, since last July, Mondex is backed by the National Westminster and Midland banks and British Telecom.

But retailers are worried that the two systems might not be compatible. "Shops never want more than one box on the till," said Elizabeth Stanton Jones, a director of financial services at the British Retail Consortium.

We are not against competition, but when it comes to operating a system, there has to be consistency between them."

David Birch, of the consultancy Hyperion, said: "There are international standards, so it doesn't necessarily follow that the Visa and Mondex systems would be incompatible."

Visa presently has trials running in a number of countries, including Australia, the US, Canada, and Latin America. It is testing a number of different formats, including disposable cards which, like BT phone-cards, would be thrown away once used; "rechargeable" cards, which could be "refilled" with cash from the holder's account; and "combined function" cards, adding cash to an existing credit or debit card.

news

Banished children get help to find parents

ALAN MURDOCH
Dublin

The Irish Government has promised more than 2,000 people sent as children to new homes in the US between 1948 and 1962 help in contacting their natural parents. Extensive files in the National Archive giving details of their past were discovered this week.

The children, many born outside marriage or to parents too poor to support them, were sent at ages ranging from 12 months to seven years old for adoption by US families. But many later found their birth certificates were false and they were unable to trace their natural parents.

Following initial revelations the Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring ordered a search for any surviving records of the children's adoptions. Many were sent abroad by homes run by religious or public bodies. Some

distraught mothers only discovered their babies had been sent abroad when they arrived to visit them in orphanages.

The archive records show an average of 110 children a year were "exported" over 14 years. They include names and dates of birth of the children, and details of both their natural and adoptive parents.

Each file contained a declaration by the mother, confirming the child was born out of wedlock, and undertaking "never to attempt to see, interfere with, or make any claim" to the child in future.

In a speech at a convent school in Waterford, Mr Spring said: "One can only imagine the pain that must have been involved in signing many of those declarations."

He said the files exposed the different values of the time. He added: "They [the adoptive parents] had to supply a letter

from their own doctor confirming in his opinion that they were unable to have children of their own and that they were 'not deliberately shirking natural parenthood'."

The news has been welcomed by some of the adoptees. Maggie Butler, who has spent years searching for her mother, yesterday spoke of her elation at having "an important part of my life and that of 1500 other people acknowledged by the country where we were born".

The archives could now allow her mother the choice of whether to meet her. "My goal is to find her. My heart's desire is to meet her," she said.

The child care agency Barnados confirmed this week it had been contacted by more than 200 such US-reared adults seeking their original families.

Nora Gibbons, a spokeswoman for Barnados, stressed it was important to reassure

birth mothers that the archive information would not be made "indiscriminately available". Counselling was necessary and third-party mediation was needed for contacts between mothers and adopted children.

Barnados called for a search of government departments for files on other children sent abroad via other schemes.

Mr Spring said he was seeking further information from the Irish Passport Office, which had earlier indicated that passport photos of the departing infants, in some cases the natural mother's only reminder of her child, had been destroyed.

Referring to the recent controversy over Chinese orphanages, Mr Spring said "it is perhaps too easy for us to have strong views about the way in which children are treated abroad, and to assume that we have no questions to answer... here at home."



Slice of life: One of Alexander Fleming's first laboratory samples of penicillin mould, originally given to one of his assistants, which is expected to raise more than £10,000 at auction at Sotheby's. Photograph: Lynn Ferguson

Plan to extend protection for buried treasure

STEPHEN GOODWIN

Finds of ancient coins and other gold and silver artefacts will no longer be subject to the curious anomalies of the medieval law of Treasure Trove under a Bill given its unopposed Second Reading in the Commons yesterday.

In 1994-95, 27 finds were considered by the special committee which fixes the value of treasure. The largest valuation was £52,600 for 68 12th-century coins from King Stephen's reign, found by a metal detectorist at Box, Wiltshire.

But, as the Commons heard as it debated a Treasure Bill introduced by backbencher Sir Anthony Grant, the present common law, dating from the era of Richard the Lionheart, is "riddled with anomalies".

Until comparatively recent times, Treasure Trove was not seen as part of the nation's heritage but as a lucky boost to the monarch's coffers. Today it is part of the hereditary revenues of the Crown surrendered in return for the Civil List money.

Objects made of gold or silver found in the ground have to be reported to the local coroner. If they are declared Treasure Trove, museums are given a chance to acquire the objects and the finder is paid the open market value.

In the case of Britain's most expensive find, the Hoxne

Hoard, discovered in Suffolk in 1992, the Treasure Trove Reviewing Committee sought four estimates to help it decide on a market value of £1.75m. The 15,000 Roman gold and silver coins and jewellery went to the British Museum.

However, an object can only be declared Treasure Trove if it has been deliberately buried with the intention of recovery. As Mark Fisher, a Labour heritage spokesman, put it: "It is ridiculous to expect a coroner's court in 1996 to be able to say whether Ethelred the Unready actually intended to put a pot with 10 gold coins into the earth or not."

The Bill will remove this anomaly and widen the types of treasure to all coin hoards of whatever composition, except for groups of fewer than 10 base-metal coins, and to all other objects with a minimum precious metal content of 5 per cent. Both coins and objects must be at least 300 years old. Failure to report a find to the coroner within 14 days could result in a fine of up to £5,000 or up to three months in jail.

Sir Anthony, Conservative MP for Cambridgeshire South West, said the current law was a "medieval lottery" and had resulted in important finds being lost to the nation.

Enjoying government support, the Bill is fairly certain to reach the statute book.

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World first as woman gets lung from living donors

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

A cystic fibrosis sufferer has scored a double first by becoming the first patient in Britain to undergo a lung transplant from a living donor – her father – and the first in the world to receive from a living donor – a family friend – who is unrelated to her.

The Cystic Fibrosis Trust yesterday welcomed the pio-

neering surgery, saying it offered new hope to scores of sufferers whose chances of survival are limited by the shortage of lungs for transplant from dead donors. Up to 40 per cent of cystic fibrosis patients die on the waiting list.

Clare Wildman, 20, who needed oxygen 24 hours a day, can now breathe almost normally after receiving lung tissue from her father Graham, 43, and Jude Harris, 40, a close

friend of her mother's. They each donated about a fifth of their lung tissue, comprising the lower left lobe of Mr Wildman's lung and the lower right of Mrs Harris's.

The six-hour operation, performed at Harefield Hospital in Middlesex by Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub, the world famous transplant surgeon, took place July last. He agreed to carry it out only after approval from independent ethical committees

at Harefield, and the Royal Brompton Hospital, and from the Department of Health.

The idea for the operation came from Ms Wildman's mother, Averil, who read about the success of similar ventures in America where about 20 such operations have been carried out. She intended to be a donor along with her husband, but her lung tissue was not a good match with her daughter's.

Other close family members were tested for compatibility with Ms Wildman, but were not considered suitable either. Her 16-year-old brother, Stephen, volunteered but the Wildmans thought he was too young.

Mrs Harris and her husband, from Hertfordshire, then offered themselves as donors as Ms Wildman's health deteriorated. Mrs Harris was the better match. "I didn't want Clare to die. I have two healthy daughters and I've known her

mother for 30 years, since we were nine years old. It is like we are related." Ms Wildman is now planning to go to college.

Professor Yacoub said the operation was possible because everyone has spare lung capacity, and because donated lung tissue will expand to fill the cavity. He told the *Daily Express*: "As doctors we are trained to treat patients and it goes against the grain to operate on somebody who is normal ... But we

cannot overrule members of the community if they want something so much, so long as they understand the implications ..."

Dr Martin Scott from the Cystic Fibrosis Trust said yesterday: "The ability to use living donors for some CF patients is a major surgical advance and should help reduce the dreadful odds against survival."

Live donors are routinely used in kidney and liver transplants.

Myll under threat: Dorrell intervenes to stop removal of village's red pillar and post box

Flying the flag earns scorn of social workers

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

The Union Flag fluttering in the breeze, a shop, a red phone box and an old-fashioned pillar box. These may evoke a cosy image of rural Britain, along with cricket on the village green, but for one group of social services inspectors they were too much.

A handicapped centre in Cumbria, which had created this idyll for its residents, to make them feel secure and part of an often unfriendly country, was advised to remove these harmless symbols of village life. There was more. Down too, should come the names chosen by the centre for the bungalows in its grounds – names like Peace, Love, Trust and Hope, deliberately chosen to make the residents feel secure and wanted.

The ensuing row between Barrow & District Spastic & Handicapped Society, which runs The Croft home in Barrow-in-Furness, and Cumbria Social Services was part of a wider dispute which went all the way to Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health.

When Mr Dorrell intervened, in the words of Dennis Rose, the handicapped society chairman, there was "a dramatic change in the attitude" of the social workers. All the items which social services found unacceptable were dropped,

namely, wrote Mr Rose in a letter to Peter Thurnham MP, whose son, Stephen, attends The Croft: "Flagpole, telephone kiosk, letter-box and names on bungalows."

Two years ago, The Croft became the first handicapped centre in Britain to create "a village" for its 23 adult residents. Instead of them living in one building, the Society built four separate six-bedroomed bungalows in the grounds, to give them a sense of liberty. "At last they could live independently and have a sense of freedom while being in carefully nursed surroundings," said Mr Rose.

To create a village atmosphere, a flagpole was installed in the middle, with a pay-phone in a proper red box and a post box. A kiosk selling sweets, crisps and soft drinks was built, together with a communal meeting-cum-smoker room and TV lounge. The bungalows were given their innocuous names and the meeting room was named after Mr Rose's late wife, Teresa, who had herself been a driving force behind The Croft. Paid for by voluntary funds, it cost £850,000.

Late last year, social services paid an unannounced visit, said Mr Rose, and declared they "did not like the names, did not like the phone box, did not like the post box, did not like the flagpole and did not like the club house being named after my wife."

It was, said Mr Rose, "bureaucracy gone mad". The flag was a particularly sore point since he had served in the Second World War. "I am proud of the Union Flag and I wanted it flying proudly in the village – not least because it helps to acquaint people with learning difficulties about their flag and their country."

There was nothing sinister about the names for the bungalows, either. "Peace, Love, Trust and Hope are four very important words for handicapped people," said Mr Rose.

Jean Bradshaw, head of Quality Assurance for Cumbria Social Services, said their objections centred on The Croft's philosophy. "Our concern is that people should be encouraged to be integrated into the local community as much as possible."

"In any setting we want people to be integrated. Our worry is that people weren't being given the opportunity to join in normal facilities," said Ms Bradshaw. It was better that the residents used the local phone and post box rather than those in their "village".

She admitted that Mr Dorrell was involved in "some discussions" but denied he forced a change of heart. In a joint statement last night, Cumbria Social Services and Mr Rose said any problems between them had been "resolved very amicably".



Sandy shore: Country and western fans at Llandudno, Gwynedd, where over 1,000 devotees are expected for the 2nd North Wales Country Music Festival this weekend at the North Wales Theatre

Photograph: Steve Peake

Paper accused over trial report

A judge has reported the *Daily Mail* to the Attorney General for possible contempt of court after a trial had to be aborted as the jury was due to retire to consider a verdict.

The newspaper had published a report on the morning of the fourth day of the Old Bailey trial of Stephen King, who was accused of recklessly starting a fire on the property of his ex-girlfriend's family. The report included details which the jury had not been told and which, both prosecution and defence counsel agreed, could have prejudiced its verdict.

The paper apologised to the judge, Recorder James Chadwin, for the error. But the judge decided yesterday to refer the matter to the Attorney General. "There has been here, it is conceded, a degree of negligence – possibly characterised as incompetence – but certainly falling below the reporting standards that those who sit in this court have come to accept from the press," he said. The consequences were "enormous and disastrous".

King had admitted setting fire to furniture near his ex-girlfriend Gemma Jones's home in Kingswood, Surrey, but had denied the more serious charge that he started the fire while being reckless to whether life would be endangered.

He was formally found not guilty of that charge after the jury was discharged yesterday. The prosecution had considered asking for a re-trial but decided against it because Miss Jones and her father felt unable to go through with another trial.

King, 25, a DJ from Sutton, Surrey, has also admitted damaging property and displaying a pornographic picture of Miss Jones in public. He is due to be sentenced at the end of this month and faces a jail term.

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international

Hardline clerics fail to find a niche in Iran's exclusive poll

ROBERT FISK
Tehran

On the Karaj expressway, the 20ft high posters yesterday urged Iranians to vote as an Islamic duty. "For the greatness of Islam, the continuation of reconstruction and the building of Iran," ran the legend beneath. "It's the first time I've seen the word Iran without 'Islamic Republic' printed in front of it," one of our taxi's passengers announced. "Do you think this means something?"

It's that kind of election. The Council of Experts have vetted more than 3,000 candidates for their Islamic credentials, small parties have thrown in their hand before the poll and the two large groups contesting the parliamentary election have so much in common that several of their candidates have a foot in both camps. "You must know more about this election than we do," Mohamed Ali Sayyas said yesterday at the Vanak polling station in north Tehran. If only we did.

But the poll, for all its shortcomings, in Western eyes at least, will probably decide next year's president. If the "Association of Militant Clergy" gains a majority, Ali-Akbar Nateq-Nouri, at present the Speaker of Parliament, will succeed Hashemi Rafsanjani as President of Iran. If the "Servants of Reconstruction" gain more seats, then either Vice-President Hassan Habibi or the Mayor of Tehran, Gholamreza Khabaschi, will take office.

Yet the most fascinating aspect is that the real left-wing

clergy, who have always espoused the export of an Islamic revolution and played a role creating the Lebanese Hizbollah and other groups, are totally cut off from the political process. Mehdi Kharoubi and Hojatolislam Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, whom the West love to hate, have no role, since their Islamic "credentials" were found wanting during the last parliamentary elections.

So at the moment when the US is urging the world to isolate Iran as a bastion of "international terrorism", the men supposedly responsible for this unhappy state of affairs are so isolated that former allies would yesterday not even furnish the *Independent* with their telephone numbers. American journalists trying to follow up US-Israeli accusations of "terrorism" against Iran are thus finding little proof of it amid Iran's very exclusive election.

For the truth is that both the "Reconstructors" and the "Servants" are right-wing conservatives. The former may be more liberal on the Islamic dress code on women and the use of satellite dishes and the latter prefer a more Saudi-style code of conduct. But they both number the bazaaris - the free-enterprise bourgeois who originally funded Khomeini's Islamic revolution - among their ranks.

The cry for world revolution and the domestically more important calls for social justice and the alleviation of poverty, which were previously the preserve of Mr Mohtashemi and his colleagues, have virtually dis-

appeared from the parliamentary agenda save for the tiny "House of Workers of the Islamic Republic of Iran", whose leader, Ali-Reza Mahjoub, has campaigned for a programme of Blair-like modesty, state control and careful privatisation at the same time. Other figures have had a harder time.

Ibrahim Yazdi, for example, tried to hold a press conference this week to advertise his "Liberation Party of Iran". No sooner had the liberal intellectual received approval for the meeting from the Ministry of Islamic Guidance than armed Interior Ministry troops turned up at his office, confiscated the video-cassettes of all foreign film crews and advised journalists to leave. They did. And Dr Yazdi pulled out of the election.

Nor could anyone claim to have witnessed election fever on the streets of Tehran. Two central city voting stations I called at were empty at mid-morning.

Iranian Armenians, who must elect two Armenians for parliament out of three candidates, were queuing to vote at their own church-school polling station. But at Vanak only 500 people had turned up by early afternoon. Outside the Friday prayers ceremony at Tehran university, an old man from Tabriz whose nephew was killed at Khorramshah in the first Gulf war - he had brought the body home from the battlefield in his own ambulance - expressed a desire for no change. "We are happy with what we have," he said. The real question is: if there is change, will anyone notice?



Past master: An Iranian voting in Tehran yesterday as Ayatollah Khomeini, the late Islamic revolutionary leader, looks on. Photograph: Reuters

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Taiwan in dollar panic as Peking starts tests

TERESA POOLE
Peking

Taiwan's people rushed to convert their money into US dollars yesterday, and braced themselves for further missile tests by China into the sea off the island's two main ports. But there was also relief that the mainland's first three test launches had not strayed into Taiwanese territory.

The Defence Ministry in Taipei said that three surface-to-surface M-9 missiles had landed in the sea early in the morning, coming down inside the two target "box" zones previously announced by Peking. They were the first to be unleashed during the exercises, which will continue until next Friday. Two missiles landed about 48 miles west of the southern port of Kaohsiung, and the other near the north-eastern port of Keelung where the target area extends to just 20 miles from the coast. The missiles were not carrying live warheads and had not flown over the island.

In Peking, the leadership stepped up the invective against Taiwan's President, Lee Teng-hui, the front-runner in the island's first democratic presidential elections on 23 March. Since Mr Lee's visit to the United States last June, the mainland has accused him of seeking independence for Taiwan. The Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, last night warned: "Our struggle will not stop for a single day so long as Taiwan authorities do not cease activities to split the motherland for a single day."

Mr Lee has said reunification remained the "ultimate goal", but that the time was "not right" while a Communist government remained in power on the mainland.

China's Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, said: "The Taiwan compatriots don't have to panic over the pending military exercises by the People's Liberation Army. What they should really worry about is that the 'independence' seekers, with support from some international forces bent on splitting China, continue on their wrong path. That will be a real disaster."

Peking's military exercises are aimed at reducing voter support for Mr Lee, with China's leaders apparently ignoring the possibility that their strategy might have the opposite effect.

Throughout the day, Taiwan's ports resolutely remained open but radio stations broadcast repeated warnings to fishermen to stay away from the target zones. Amid a growing siege mentality, many banks were running out of US dollar notes, and were restricting purchases to \$2,000 (£1,300) as people queued to transfer money into a safer currency. The Bank

of America said it would fly in more notes on Monday to meet the shortage. Shops saw brisk sales of rice and staple foods. The Taiwan government tried hard to calm people's nerves, and lambasted the mainland for its "crude threats". The Defence Minister, Chiang Chung-ling, said the island would "fight" if there were an attack which violated its territorial waters. "But the 12-nautical-mile does not represent our bottom line," he added.

Government support for the stock market meant it actually gained more than 1-per cent yesterday. The central bank, which has the world's second largest foreign reserves, said it would continue to bolster the local currency. President Lee appealed for calm, and continued his election campaigning.

China conducted two series of missile tests last year, following Mr Lee's US visit in June, but the present exercises are taking place much closer to Taiwan's coastline. There has been widespread concern that a misfired missile could land in



Lee Teng-hui: Tests aimed at denting his support

Taiwanese waters, or even on the island, triggering retaliation by Taiwan and a full-blown military conflict.

International condemnation was swift. In the most pointed gesture, Tokyo said it had sent a patrol boat to the area to secure the safety of navigation. The Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto said Peking's policy towards Taiwan was taking an "unfortunate direction".

The US said the tests were "provocative and reckless". In Washington, a State Department spokesman warned of unspecified "consequences" if the missiles went off course. The Defence Secretary, William Perry, said he and other White House officials protested strongly to Lin Hsueqi, foreign affairs director of China's state council.

"I believe the message we communicated was very clear and straightforward," Mr Perry said. He added that the aircraft carrier *Independence* was about 200 miles north-east of Taiwan and a cruiser and destroyer were nearby.

مكتبة الزميل

Summit shows 'solidarity' with Mid-East peace

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

The US wants next Wednesday's hastily arranged Middle East summit to produce "concrete measures" to counter terrorism and promote security across the region.

The Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, said yesterday the conference, in the Egyptian resort of Sharm-el-Sheikh on the Red Sea, would be co-chaired by President Bill Clinton and his Egyptian counterpart, Hosni Mubarak. Among those attending will be King Hussein of Jordan, the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and the leaders or senior representatives of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, and of the European Union - among them Jacques Chirac, the French President.

First suggested by Israel and Jordan in the wake of the recent suicide bombings in Israel, the idea of a conference was instantly seized upon by Washington, where Mr Christopher and senior aides have worked night and day this week to iron out the details. The aim, said the Secretary of State, was to create a "firebreak" against the march of events in the Middle East. Washington was standing "shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel and other peace-makers in the region," to stop terrorism destroying the peace process. "Concrete steps," he predicted, would come out of the meeting.

But it was not clear whether Syria, which has given at least moral support to Hamas and other anti-Israeli terrorist

groups, had even been invited to Sharm-el-Sheikh. Though Syrian officials yesterday again denied the country was a haven for terrorists, Damascus has yet to issue a direct condemnation of the bombings, and last week Israel broke off bilateral discussions here on a separate peace with Syria.

Experts said that with Syria absent, the chances of major practical moves against the terrorists were small, and unlikely to go much beyond the logistical help already sent to Israel by the US, and its pressure on neighbouring states to redouble their efforts to stamp out Hamas and other extremist groups.

But however slender the tangible results, the summit's symbolic importance is huge, as a show of support for the peace process, a ringing gesture of solidarity with Israel from former Arab foes, and a demonstration to Hamas that the terrorist group is isolated in the region.

The next day, as Mr Christopher begins a longer Middle East tour of his own, Mr Clinton will travel to Israel to underline his own sympathy with the horror, grief and outrage of the Jewish state at the four bombings in the last two weeks, which have claimed 61 lives.

White House officials hope too that the physical presence of a US President in Israel will give a boost to the staggering Labour government of Shimon Peres, facing possible defeat in May's general election at the hands of Benjamin Netanyahu, whose Likud party will have little truck with the peace process.

There are also domestic imperatives for Mr Clinton. With

the collapse of the IRA ceasefire, and now the bombings in Israel, two peace-making efforts that were among his biggest foreign policy achievements are tottering - just as the Presidential campaign heats up. ■ Beirut - Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hizbollah yesterday slammed the summit, Reuters reports. Hizbollah said the meeting would be "a practice of arrogant American hegemony over our region and a consecration of Israeli control over it". The organisation added that its guerrilla war to oust Israeli forces from south Lebanon and suicide attacks by Palestinian groups in Israel were justified as they "target an enemy occupying the homeland".



A woman mourns among the remains of the demolished West Bank home of Rayid Shammoli, said by the Israelis to have suicide-bombed a bus in Jerusalem on Sunday

UK holds out for Iran links

SARAH HELM
Palermo

Britain will today urge its European partners to reject American calls to sever diplomatic links with Iran over the latest Middle East violence, risking a US-European diplomatic rift.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, will warn EU foreign ministers, meeting in Palermo, against the risks of isolating Iran. A prime concern for Britain is the need to maintain ties with Tehran to pursue efforts to lift the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. While expressing concern over evidence that Tehran may be supporting Hamas, the group which perpetrated the latest bloodshed, Mr Rifkind will say there is no evidence of its direct financial or military support.

Refusal by the EU to end so-called "critical dialogue", a low-level form of diplomatic contact established between the EU and Iran, launched in 1992, would anger Washington, which is determined to find some new

response to Islamic militancy, and support Israel. The Israelis have long argued that Hamas is nurtured by Iran. Hamas leaders do not dispute their political allegiance to Iran but clear evidence that the movement is directly financed or armed by Iran has been hard to come by.

Critical dialogue is the only communication available to Britain to put diplomatic pressure on Iran to lift the death threat against Mr Rushdie. The fatwa, issued in 1989 after the publication of *The Satanic Verses*, provoked Britain to cut diplomatic ties with Iran.

However, at the Edinburgh summit in 1992, it persuaded its EU partners to launch critical dialogue, which involves contacts between EU diplomats and Iranian officials in Tehran, dialogue, and occasional higher-level contacts.

Although the discussions have not brought real progress on the Rushdie question, the Foreign Office continues to argue that dialogue is a better course than isolation.

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SARAJEVO DAYS

Battle fatigue sets in on the home front

They say that moving house is one of the most stressful experiences one can have - and I can confirm that it far outstrips living in a war zone.

In the four traumatic weeks since our landlord announced his intention to move back into his Sarajevo home (two bedrooms, office, sitting room with view of Serb trenches, kitchen, bathroom with running water most of the time, and garage) my household has wallowed in nostalgic memories of siege, shells and snipers. Life was so much simpler then.

For him it's just an attempt to escape the hideous reality of house-hunting in competition with hordes of foreigners arriving to rebuild Bosnia, refugees returning home and all the veteran correspondents, aid workers and political advisers being booted from the (cheap) places we had snapped up during the war.

It happened one night: my flat-mate, Stacy, who works for Newsweek, called on the last day of my holiday to announce our impending eviction. We railed and raged: how dare the landlord want to move back into his own house in this callous way?

Never mind, I said. I know the number of an estate agent who apparently finds houses immediately and then charges the landlord. It will be fine: now we can get a bigger house so that the various Newsweek correspondents and photographers who come through can have a spare bedroom rather than the sofa. This could be a blessing in disguise, I said.

Thirty-odd houses later, I'm in the new place, admiring the scarlet and orange shagpile carpeting the kitchen door, the electric-blue pile on the upstairs floor, thanking God that Stacy went on holiday this morning: she will need to gather her strength before facing the giant photographic *trompe l'oeil* (a woodland scene in autumn) decorating the stairwell. Even retro fashion hasn't become this Seventies yet. And the worst of it is we are only planning to spend two months here - it was a last resort to avoid imminent homelessness.

We had found the perfect flat (three bedrooms and an office, multiple balconies, white walls, wood floors, gracious living, no view of sniper nests, just in case, two garages) 24 hours before our eviction date. The sitting tenant had even agreed to

share with us for March and then move across the hall to a second, smaller flat. We were ecstatic for, oh, several minutes. Until a friend phoned to say that he was now being evicted from the smaller flat so that we could have the bigger place.

We decided there had been enough ethnic cleansing already, and that adding one cross American and his Canadian flat-mate would be A Bad Thing.

The trouble here, when whining about house-hunting, is that all too many locals have had really stressful experiences: the new landlord's family in eastern Bosnia, for example. Dozens of relatives were expelled from their homes when the Serbs took Zvornik in 1992; they now live as refugees in Austria and Sweden.

And one cousin who fled to Srebrenica that summer was caught by the Bosnian Serbs and machine-gunned in a huge group; he felt his father fall dead, then pulled his wife down with him. There the couple lay among the corpses. A soldier walked up and shot his wife in the head but he survived, playing dead. Once the soldiers had gone, he found a few other survivors and walked through enemy territory to safety. At least our rent money will fund a trip to see the son and daughter who fled the siege in 1994.

And the landlords - he's a Muslim, she's a Croat, very Sarajevo - are so nice that we should be able to cope with the inevitable, Yugoslav flaws that affect even the perfect flat: landlords in this part of the world believe that ownership gives them the right to wander in at will, every day or so, to check on the place. The lawyer renting the perfect flat on behalf of its owner, a Serb who moved to Belgrade, adopts this policy with zeal.

Still, he surely could not be as bad as my friend Chris's landlady in Zagreb: she used to pop in to do her ironing, cooking or washing every day. Eventually he cracked, and called her English-speaking son to try to resolve the issue. "I need to talk to you about the flat," Chris began in a purposeful tone. "Fine," replied the son. "I was planning to come by for a show-cr tonight after basketball so we'll chat then."

Emma Daly

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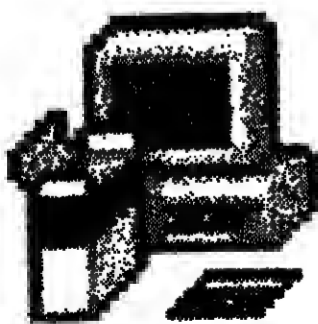


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Chechens win publicity battle with Moscow

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

Chechen rebels began melting back into their mountain hideouts last night after an all-out assault on Grozny which was evidently meant as a message to the Kremlin that it will not end the war in the republic without negotiating with them.

Fierce fighting continued in the city yesterday, but some reports indicated the Chechens were gradually withdrawing after a three-day battle in which they seized a third of the capital, suffered many scores of casualties, but secured a sizeable publicity coup.

Russia's Interior Ministry - keen to imply that it has emerged victorious from the fray - said that the situation was "under control", as federal troops began "search and destroy" missions to flush out the remaining pockets of Chechen fighters held up in the city.

As they did so, Anatoly Kulikov, the Interior Minister - who co-commanded Russia's disastrous bombardment at Pervomayskoye - touched down at Grozny airport, where he held talks with the head of the Moscow-backed regional government, Dokku Zavgayev. The Chechen assault began at dawn

on Wednesday, the eve of a meeting of President Boris Yeltsin's Security Council to discuss ways of settling the 15-month conflict, which he has vowed to end before the presidential election in June. The timing strongly suggests it was an attempt to steal the thunder from Mr Yeltsin, who left the meeting claiming to have a framework for a settlement, but without revealing details.

The President, although vague, did indicate that the Russian forces will continue to fight the rebels and their leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev, with whom he has ruled out negotiations. The attack by the Chechens, who demand independence from Russia, appears to have been an effort to show that there can be no enduring settlement which excludes them.

Comment on Chechnya in Moscow was muted yesterday, as it was a holiday, but the latest flare-up has already been seized upon by Mr Yeltsin's political opponents, who are well aware of the mood of public anger and frustration engendered by the war.

This sentiment is hardly surprising, given the disasters suffered by the Russians in the past six months. They have seen huge sums of money earmarked

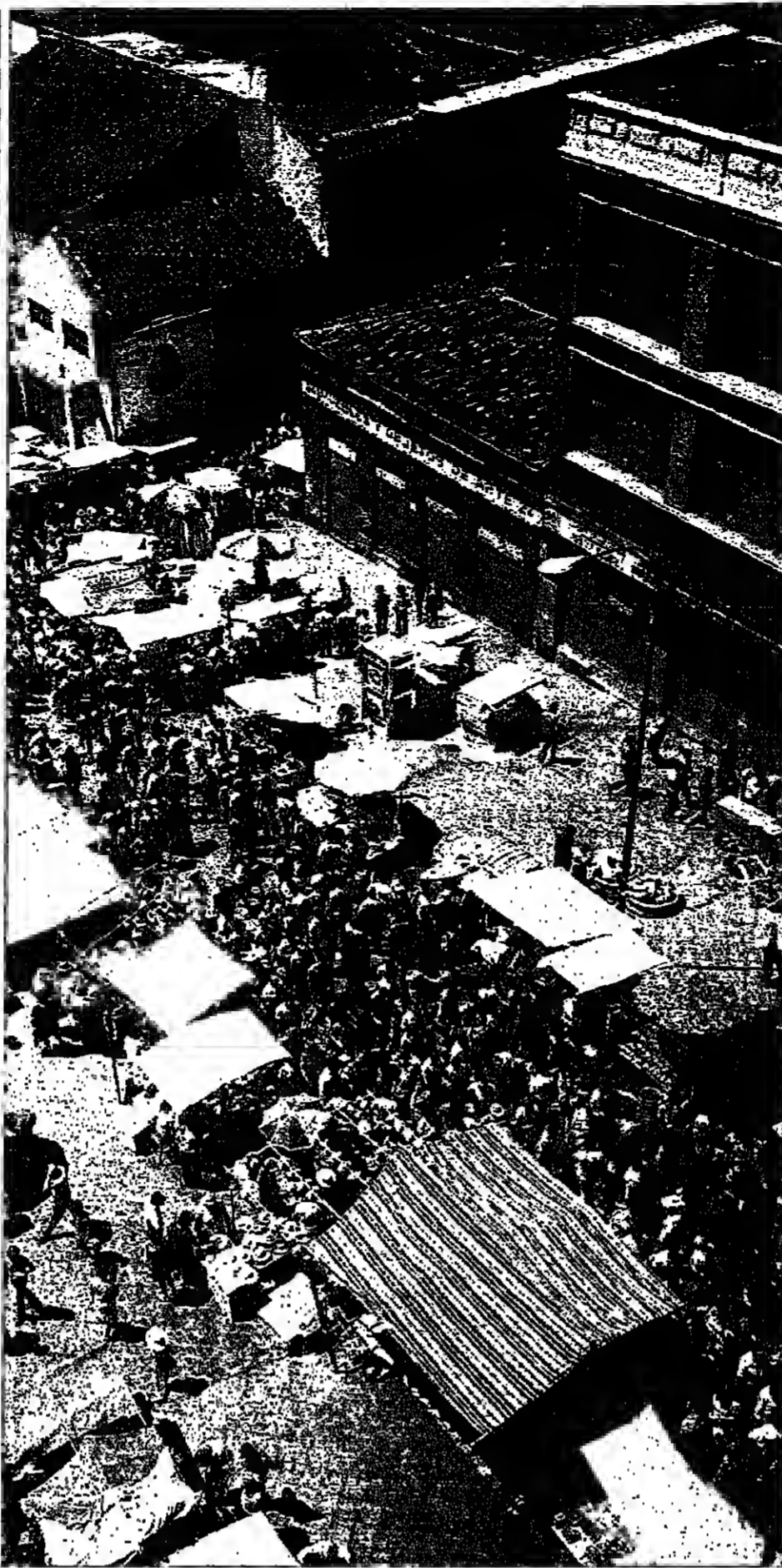
for a small Caucasus republic that most of the country cares little about, while millions of ethnic Russians wait for months for pay or pensions.

They have witnessed their army, including their once-prized special forces, being humiliated at Pervomayskoye by a band of 250 hostage-taking rebels, many of whom managed to escape, despite almost blanket bombing.

In addition, the former military commander in Chechnya, Lt-Gen Anatoly Romanov, is still in a coma, the victim of a bomb attack in October.

And they have seen young Russian soldiers dying daily. All this from a group of rebels under a former Soviet air force officer turned clan leader - Mr Dudayev - representing a minority of Chechens, whom many link with crime.

Mr Yeltsin will be acutely aware that this is probably not the last he will hear from Chechnya, a war that he now concedes was a mistake, before the election. Although he is doing his best to convince voters he has a workable solution to the conflict, most analysts doubt it. What they do not doubt, though, is that the rebels will go on doing their best to oust him from the Kremlin.



Garrotted: Big business is behind the new regulations for the Rastro, which could force small traders out of the popular flea-market. Photograph: Robert Harding Picture Library

Trader's tax squeezes Madrid's flea market

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid

Traders of the Rastro, the best known flea-market in Spain, are up in arms over plans by Madrid's regional government that they fear will choke off their livelihood. They say proposals to regulate street selling will slash their number from 1,745 to 300 and transform the face of the capital's much loved landmark.

The draft law would oblige street sellers to pay an "economic activities" tax plus insurance and social security contributions that traders fear could amount to £180 a month. But many make so little from their stalls that they would be driven away, according to the Independent Association of Rastro Traders that represents the majority of the stallholders.

"We work only on Sundays and for most of us it is the only income we have. Some people have been coming for 30 or 40 years, artisans selling their own handicrafts, and we can't afford to pay extra taxes. The authorities are treating us as professional traders, but most of us are not," says the traders' president, Mario Agreda.

Mr Agreda believes the regulations would break a traditional bond between the people of Madrid, international visitors for whom the Rastro is as essential a part of life as the Prado, and the workers of the area. "They are squeezing us with a vile garrote, so that we will disappear, trying to make us into dinosaurs, an extinct species," Mr Agreda said yesterday.

At present, Rastro traders pay only an annual fee for the right to occupy a spot on the street. There is no actual street called the Rastro. The area, a focus of informal trading for centuries, covers a vast sprawl of streets in what used to be known as the "low quarters", a nod to the area's working class origins and its low-lying situation.

It fans out from the Plaza Cascorro, dominated by a monument honouring a soldier from a nearby orphanage who volunteered for a suicide mission against Cuban rebels in 1890. Up to half a million people cram through on a summer Sunday. The area is studded with tapas bars, which as lunch time approaches become filled with those seeking wine, prawns and respite from the sun that spears you in the face. These bars "would all die" warns Mr Agreda.

The head of the UGT union's trade and restaurants division, Daniel Prieto, says the regulations are inspired by business interests. "Street trading accounts for huge sums of money, and big companies want to push the little antique dealers or jewellery makers or quill pen collectors out of this traditional centre, so that they can move in themselves," he said yesterday.

Eugenio Morales, a Socialist on Madrid's city council, which is run by the conservative Popular Party, said his group would propose the opening of a consultation process at the council meeting next Tuesday. "Any new regulation must arise from discussions among those affected, the traders and neighbourhood associations, everyone involved in the Rastro. You can't impose a law that no one wants, or you'll have trouble," he warned yesterday.

Those responsible for the proposals say the Rastro would have to comply, but amendments will be considered. Carmen Caballero, head of trade and consumer affairs for the regional government, said yesterday: "We are preparing a law that will regulate street trading in general, and the Rastro is one of many street markets. Our aim is to dignify the profession of street trader and protect the consumer. But if the Town Hall asks us to make an exception for the Rastro we are prepared to consider their request."

Estonia backs Chechens

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Estonia's difficult relations with Russia grew even more tense yesterday after Moscow denounced Estonia's parliament for expressing sorrow at the reported death of a Chechen guerrilla commander. The commander, Salnan Raduyev, organised a hostage-taking raid last January on the southern Russian town of Kizlyar and is said to have died in this week's clashes in Chechnya.

More than 60 of Estonia's 101 members of parliament sent a message of condolence to the

Chechen leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev, whose fight for independence is viewed with sympathy in Estonia. Mr Dudayev once commanded a Soviet air base in Estonia and won popularity for refusing to crack down on Estonia's drive for independence from the Soviet Union.

Reacting to the message, the Russian foreign ministry said: "This unprecedented cynical action underlines once again the real aspirations of Estonian nationalists, who did not miss a chance to demonstrate their hatred of Russia. It looks as if Tallinn has deliberately chosen the path of supporting terrorism."

Among the main issues clouding relations between Estonia and Moscow are a border dispute and Russia's contention that the authorities in Tallinn discriminate against the large ethnic Russian minority in Estonia.

Western governments are concerned at the frosty atmosphere in Estonian-Russian relations as they have strongly supported the independence of Estonia and the two other Baltic states, Latvia and Lithuania. The West has held back from offering security guarantees to the Baltic states, a factor that complicates their hopes of joining the European Union.

VACANCY.

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When the monks who lived at Bury St. Edmunds abbey in the 13th century were allowed to speak (which wasn't very often), Latin was the holy order of the day.

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ABBOT ALE

FROM GREENE KING

IN BRIEF

Cypriot hijack plane heads for Bulgaria

Ankara - A Turkish Cypriot plane with at least 100 passengers on board was hijacked last night on its way to Istanbul, an airline official said. The Boeing 727 was reported to be heading for Sofia, Bulgaria. The passengers included Russians, Iranians, Bulgarians and Turks, said Umit Ulku, head of the board of directors for the Turkish Cypriot airline. AP

Killer confesses

Paris - A former soldier in the Bosnian Serb army has described his part in the execution of about 1,200 Bosnian Muslim prisoners in a single day after the fall of Srebrenica last summer. Drzen Erdemovic told the newspaper *Le Figaro* he believed he personally shot dead about 70 people. Reuter

Aids robber dies

Turin - Ferdinando Attanasio, 38, a member of the "Aids Gang", a trio who robbed banks knowing they could not go to jail because of their illness, has died in a Turin hospital. Reuter

Amnesty plea

Cape Town - A self-confessed assassin of the apartheid era, Dirk Coetzee, said he had applied to Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission for an amnesty for 27 crimes including six murders. Reuter

Goya painting found

Madrid - Workers renovating a Madrid government building have stumbled upon a previously unknown painting by Francisco de Goya. Prado Museum curators confirmed the painting, which depicts souls in purgatory and religious figures, is a Goya. AP

22 die as flats fall

Bombay - Rescue workers dug 22 bodies from the rubble of a collapsed apartment building and searched for up to seven missing people. The death toll could reach 30, said Bombay's chief fire officer. AP

Age of content

Columbia, South Carolina - Senator Strom Thurmond, at 93 and 94 days, yesterday became the oldest person ever to sit in the Senate. "It's just another day as far as I'm concerned," said Mr Thurmond. AP

Lafontaine milks ethnic German debate for votes

IMRE KARACS
Bonn

The inalienable right of Eastern Europe's German diaspora to migrate to the Fatherland has come under attack from leading opposition politicians, sparking a furious, almost racist row.

As an estimated 700,000 eligible applicants await their turn "with suitcases packed" to join the annual flow of 220,000 Volga Germans from Russia, the government in Bonn, egged on by the opposition Social Democrats, is preparing to stem the tide. Germany says it can no longer afford the *Aussiedler* - "settlers" - a term used for people of German ancestry who are guaranteed citizenship and the right of residence under the country's constitution.

Though the government has been secretly working on a plan to cut the annual quota, the issue was unexpectedly lobbed into the political arena last weekend by Oskar Lafontaine, the leader of the Social Democrats. "We have taken in 3.5 million immigrants," he said. "In the last few years we have taken in 1 million extra people of working age, and they are walk-

ing straight into unemployment - into unemployment benefit or to draw a pension or to get welfare support."

This year, 3.3bn marks (£1.5m) of public money is earmarked to help the *Aussiedler* to integrate into society, and another DM1.1bn will be paid out in pensions to Germans who were not born in Germany. At a time of rising unemployment and stagnating economy, this is fuelling resentment among voters, a sentiment Mr Lafontaine, with an eye on forthcoming regional elections, is now trying to tap.

But his remark, formalised on Tuesday by a Bundestag motion which called for the right of return to be restricted to those who already have relatives in Germany, has degenerated into a debate about ethnicity. Initially denouncing Mr Lafontaine for "populist demagoguery", the government was nevertheless quick to concede that many of the *Aussiedler* now arriving were not really German at all.

Radio talk-shows are overheating as the nation argues for the first time in 50 years over what constitutes an ethnic German. Callers cite anecdotal ev-

idence of alarming crime rates in *Aussiedler* neighbourhoods, of purported Germans speaking in strange tongues, and of a deplorable work ethic.

Opinion polls show the *Aussiedler* are not much more popular than Bosnian refugees. According to a survey in the weekly *Die Woche* this week, 70 per cent agree with Mr Lafontaine's proposal to limit their number.

Those who match expectations of cultural identity may nevertheless bring in spouses from the steppes of Central Asia, where the Volga Germans were dispersed by Stalin after Hitler's invasion in 1941. Even if their families do not find integration hard, their new neighbours in Germany often do.

This is the racist undercurrent Mr Lafontaine stirred up. Critics say the issue was conjured up for the elections in the southern Land of Baden-Württemberg, the third most popular *Aussiedler* destination last year. The state also has 10 per cent of the vote up for grabs, captured by the now-defunct extreme right Republicans five years ago. These are the votes Mr Lafontaine is now hoping to win.

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دكان الأمان

Dole must ride Southern wave to White House

RUPERT CORNWELL
Jacksonville, Florida

Don Brewer's pride and joy is The Chart. It stands on the wall of his office here, plotting how in the space of 109 days last year, John Delaney rose from 3 per cent in the polls to be elected the first Republican mayor of Jacksonville since the Reconstruction era after the Civil War.

True, Mr Delaney had a little help: a split Democratic field, the city's capture of a brand new NFL franchise, the Jacksonville Jaguars, in which he was largely instrumental – and of course the enthusiasm and zeal of Mr Brewer, a local party chairman whose sheer love of the game of politics bubbles in every word he utters.

Not of course that Mr Delaney's stunning victory of 1995 has much direct bearing on the pre-ordained victory of Bob Dole on Tuesday in Florida when, barring an astounding reversal, he will scoop up the 98 delegates at stake in the presidential primary. At the present pace – and especially after Mr Dole won all 93 delegates in New York on Thursday – "Super Tuesday" is turning into "Superfluous Tuesday", just another step in his progress towards coronation at the party convention in San Diego this August.

Lamar Alexander had made a big push here, but the former Tennessee Governor pulled out this week and threw his support behind Mr Dole. Steve Forbes's flat-tax message may stir some excitement in Florida's retiree community, and Pat Buchanan will doubtless pick up votes among born-again Christians and sundry right-wingers in these northern parts of Florida, rooted in old Dixie.

Indeed, Mr Buchanan's operation in Jacksonville last month provided one of the more bizarre incidents so far of Election '96, when it was revealed that his volunteer local organiser, Susan Lamb, was a follower of David Duke, Ku Klux Klanist, white su-

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

premacist and erstwhile candidate for Governor of Louisiana.

Television crews and reporters descended on Republican headquarters here to search for incriminating racist literature. The hunt was in vain, the organiser was sacked. But the embarrassment for Jacksonville Republicans was real. "Obviously we can't do background checks on everyone who offers to help a candidate," said Mr Brewer. "But this perception of



Bob Dole: His party must learn how to be a majority

Mr Buchanan will hurt our party. The real question is why people like Mr Lamb are attracted to him."

So Mr Dole is, the man with the machine but no message – managing none the less to find a little something for everyone in this rootless state. Up here his conservatism and military record plays well. The senior citizens in their retirement communities see one of their own in a man of 72, while down south his fulminations against Fidel Castro please the Cuban-Americans in Miami. "In Florida especially," said Matt Corrigan, political scientist at North Florida University here, "momentum is everything, and right now Dole has it. I expect him to get 40 to 50 per cent."

But will that momentum last until November? In Florida, as across the country, thoughts are already turning to the general election. "It's time to put this thing to bed," Mr Dole told his New York victory party by satellite from a campaign stop in Tampa Bay/St Petersburg on Thursday evening. "If the others want to stay in, they should focus on Bill Clinton, not me. Let's move on to the big job of restoring conservative leadership to the White House." Which leads us back to Mayor John Delaney.

His election last May was yet more proof of the change that is redrawing the US socio-political map – the secular shift of the South from Democrats to Republicans. Florida is one of the last hold-outs. The Republicans have a majority of the state senate and, Mr Brewer says, will capture its House of Representatives this autumn. But one of its senators is still a Democrat, and a brilliant 1994 campaign enabled Lawton Chiles to hang on as Governor.

This is the wave that Mr Dole must ride to win the White House. "The trouble is there's no enthusiasm for him," noted Mr Corrigan. "You can't establish a base here because the base is always moving." Florida, so much of it a glitzy, transient, anywhere USA "is a restless place, always channel-surfing politically and socially." And therein lies Mr Clinton's opportunity.

Although Florida has voted Republican in every presidential election since 1980, Mr Chiles' win has Democrats this year hoping. All the more vital therefore for Republicans to consolidate their gains in the north of the state. But despite The Chart, Mr Brewer is a worried man.

Part stems from the sheer lack of excitement Mr Dole arouses, part from a failure to adjust after the conquest of Congress in 1994. "Our advance is not irreversible," Mr Brewer warned. "We still haven't learnt how to be a majority."

Dole profile, page 19



Family affair: Steve Forbes with his daughters in New York where he pledged to stay in the race Photograph: Reuter

Court supports right to die

TIM CORNWELL
Los Angeles

The ruling by a US federal appeal court declaring a constitutional right to die has sharply divided American doctors and set the scene for a painful national debate over the issue of assisted suicide.

The strongly worded decision was a virtual invitation to the Supreme Court to step into a thorny area of medical ethics that, like abortion, pits the sanctity of life against personal freedom of choice, legal experts said.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco declared on Wednesday that a mentally competent, terminally ill adult "has a strong liberty interest in choosing a dignified and humane death rather than being reduced at the end of his existence to a child-like state of helplessness, disoriented, sedated, incompetent".

The ruling in a case involving three terminally ill patients, all of whom have since died, applies to nine western states from California to Alaska.

The court overturned local statutes banning assisted suicide and said doctors, pharmacists and family members who helped a patient to an early death were not to be prosecuted. Its decision came as a jury in Michigan yesterday debated the case of Dr Jack Kevorkian, the controversial figure known as "Dr Death" who has flouted US laws by helping 27 people take their own lives. He faces up to four years in jail.

Though polls suggest a majority of US doctors favour legalising assisted suicide, the American Medical Association attacked the ruling, along with some churches. Right-to-life groups raised the spectre of bungled mercy killings and of people pushed into choosing death by the pressure of medical bills or impatient family members.

The Ninth Circuit has a long-standing reputation as one of the most liberal appeal courts in the country and has often been overruled by the Supreme Court. Washington state prosecutors, who brought the case, have 90 days to appeal.

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DAY ONE.
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More prayer, chanting and good works.

DAY THREE.
More of the above.

DAY FOUR.
Ditto.

DAY FIVE.
More ditto.

DAY SIX.
Even more ditto.

DAY SEVEN.
At last! Arrival of the Abbot's Ale after 7 days fermentation. Celebrate with prayer, chanting and good works



ABBOT ALE

FROM GREENE KING

The high price of a chair at Oxford

Andrew Brown asks if Balliol College should accept a tainted professorship

"Honour without money, is just a disease," wrote Jean Racine, and the University of Oxford knows what he meant. It has been assiduously raising funds for years, from Americans, from Rupert Murdoch, and even from the grandchildren of Nazi industrialists. That is where the trouble started: three years ago, Dr Gertrude Flick offered a large sum, supposedly £350,000 a year for five years, to establish a Flick Professorship of European Thought. For most newspaper readers, the name Flick means only incredible wealth and divorce bills. In the tabloids, he is known as the "Muck" Flick, whose wife, Maya, successfully appealed against the scarcely credible stinginess of a £9m divorce settlement. One can see how a woman who once gave £500,000 to the Hammersmith hospital might feel insulted when asked to live on so little.

For students of the Holocaust, however, Flick was also the family name behind one of the largest industrial combines of Nazi Germany, in whose factories perhaps 30,000 enslaved labourers died. Dr Flick's grandfather, Friedrich, was sentenced to seven years for this after the war, of which he served three, without expressing remorse; and most of his fortune was confiscated. There remained enough, however, to provide the foundation for a new and even larger fortune, so that by the time he died in 1972 he was once more rich beyond imagination.

David Selbourne, the political philosopher, has urged Balliol, his "old college", to find the "moral courage" to renounce the gift. Yet the ethics committee of Oxford University has concluded that the money used to found the chair does not derive from objectionable practices.

They would, wouldn't they, retort the attackers of Balliol, and launch into ever more inventive parlor games. You would have thought it hard to improve on the Rupert Murdoch Professor of Communication Studies, Jean ("dropped") Aitchison, who has just completed delivering the Reith Lectures. But how about a Josef Stalin Chair of Minority Rights, or a Michael Howard Chair of Penal Policy?

What particularly offends the opponents of Mr Flick is exactly the factor that extracts the money from rich patrons in the first place: the fact that their names will live forever, gradually acquiring a lustre that obliterates all memories of the source of the fortune. But this is a process that has been going on for as long as there have been rich men and civilisation. All the great fortunes of the ancient world derived from slavery: Maecenas, who gave his name to a rich man's patronage of the arts, would hardly have satisfied a modern ethics committee.

The great 19th-century philanthropists - Carnegie, Rockefeller and even Ford - may now be remembered for the libraries and foundations, but they made their money off sweat and blood in appalling conditions. At some stage, surely, the good that a man does by spending his fortune must outweigh the evil that his ancestors did in getting and defending it. Many of the great British fortunes of the 18th and 19th centuries were founded on the slave trade, or on the exploitation of India; we no longer hold their heirs responsible for this.

Christina Hardyment, editor of the *Oxford Magazine*, points out that almost all the colleges were themselves founded as acts of reparation by powerful men with a great deal on their consciences. In the Middle Ages, when religion and education were almost synonymous, to found a college was a more direct means of atonement than it may seem nowadays.

The Catholic tradition of endowing masses to be said for your soul simultaneously added to the splendour of the family name and confessed its need for forgiveness. Fr Herbert McCabe, a Dominican philosopher at Blackfriars in Oxford, once said that All Souls, where Masses were to be said for the soldier at Agincourt, is "the largest war memorial in the world".

Perhaps Mr Flick's real problem is not that people are worried about the source of his money but about its destination. The establishment of a Chair of European Thought doesn't, somehow, seem to make up for the sufferings that may have gone into establishing the fortune that endowed it. But that is not because we have grown morally more exquisite than preceding generations; it is because we have lost faith in our culture.

PROFILE: Senator Robert Dole

He's sure to win his party's nomination. But what does Bob Dole stand for? Ummm, well... Rupert Cornwell reports

The first thing to know about Bob Dole, senior senator from Kansas and overwhelming favourite to win the Republican nomination to face Bill Clinton this autumn, is that when you meet him, you must proffer your left hand, not your right. If you make that mistake, he will turn, quickly but slightly awkwardly, and stretch out his left hand. Too late, you notice that the right hand, clenched around a protruding pen, is useless. The pen is there in part politely to deter people like you, in part because if he ever let go, the hand would spout uncontrollably.

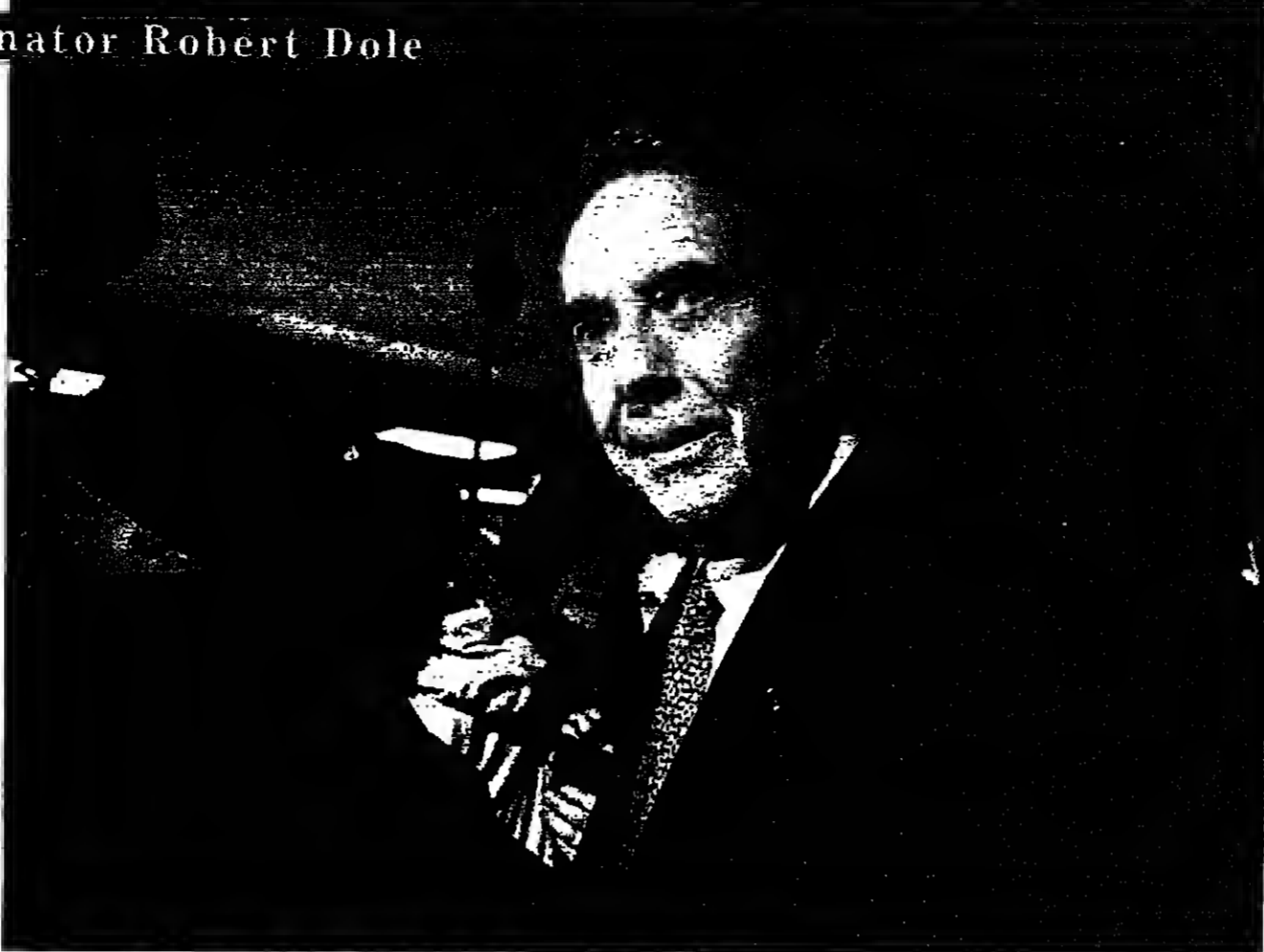
For half a century, Bob Dole has lived like that, ever since a German shell smashed into a young US army lieutenant in northern Italy on 14 April 1945, wrecking his shoulder and arm, damaging several vertebrae and leaving him half-paralysed. Rehabilitation took three years. Most men, less persevering by nature, would have remained invalids for life but Dole's sheer determination prevailed. Today, that same grit has carried him - at 72 years of age, when the healthiest of men are well into merited retirement - to the brink of, arguably, the most gruelling job on earth - the presidency of the United States.

The incongruities do not end there. An ideologically driven Republican revolution has swept Congress; yet the Republican poised to seek the White House is the least revolutionary of men, a pragmatist to his fingertips, a gradualist who believes that politics is the art of the possible. At a time of huge public distrust of career politicians, when outsiders are the rage, the Republicans are about to send forth the ultimate insider.

The US presidency is supposed to require vision; Bob Dole, by his own admission, has none. His personal story is truly heroic, but he hates to dwell on it; after 35 years in Congress, a dozen of them as his party's leader in the Senate, he is acknowledged as a master legislator, but he dares not mention his achievements. Indeed, in the bully pulpit of the White House, he promises to be tongue-tied, or worse. His stump speech is genuinely curiously staccato salvoes of statistics, random clichés drawn like numbered lottery balls from a bag. "This is 'Merica. I want to talk about being President," he will say in his rasping machine-gun of a voice, swallowing vowels by the throatful. "Merica's a great country. Greatest country on earth. Gotta make it better still."

How, you wonder, can a man in politics so long, who has run for president in 1980 and 1988, still not have learnt to sell himself? Part is surely the Kansan in him, the dour plainsman for whom understatement is a way of life, and humour by its very nature an extravagance. Dole can be very funny, but his jokes are mostly stabbing, bleak and mocking, either of himself or others. "Yeah, I got elected president once. President of Iowa," he says, apropos of his initial but worthless win in his 1988 bid for the White House.

This time, his aides have touted a "new Dole", soft, fuzzy and reassuring. But the only real difference is that thus far the famous temper, the "mean streak", has been kept under control. Dole will never be a national cheerleader. His smile is still that of an undertaker. "Dole 96", runs a fictional campaign bumper-sticker, "A Dark Man for Dark Times".



Bob Dole campaigning in New Hampshire: his smile is that of an undertaker

Photograph: Brian Harris

One final mission, objectives unknown

The other reason that Dole can't make a decent speech is because he doesn't believe it's necessary. In the Dole view of the universe, the presidency is not to be won by glib promises and florid words (indeed, Newt Gingrich's omniscient psychobabble drives him insane) but by deeds. His selling points are experience and judgement, a "safe pair of hands", as the British like to say. If Dole can seem defensive and resentful, it is because he has been passed over so often, forced to watch as Republicans he considered less deserving claimed the supreme prize.

is politics pure and simple, an almost ascetic existence in which weekend relaxation is an appearance on the Sunday morning talk-shows (on which he is the most frequent guest in network history), or a spell on the exercise bike in the living-room.

Elizabeth, his wife of 20 years and a former cabinet secretary under presidents Reagan and Bush, is as busy and as addicted to work as himself. The couple still live in the one-and-a-half bedroom flat in the Watergate building that Dole bought when his first marriage ended in divorce in 1972. An evening

ident and he cannot answer. "One last mission," he calls his candidacy, employing a metaphor of war and manifest destiny. But mission for what? Dole hasn't the faintest idea. "Haven't thought," he told the author Richard Ben Kramer last year. "If I get elected at my age... I'm not going anywhere. It's not an agenda. I'm just gonna serve my country." If Americans want sweep and uplift from a president, Dole is not their man.

But there are moments, rare moments, when the guard comes down and you glimpse the man beneath. It happened in the Senate as Dole tried in vain to prevent American troops being sent to Bosnia, warning of brave but fearful young men facing the terrible risks of combat - just like the 21-year-old Bobby Joe Dole half a century ago - but this time in an unnecessary cause. It happened too at the funeral in 1994 of Richard Nixon, another politician of a hard-scrabble upbringing who had climbed back from defeats and disgrace.

Dole delivered one of the funeral orations that day, and quoted words of Nixon that could have been his own motto: "The greatest sadness is not to try and fail but to fail to try." Maybe they also reminded him of his own childhood in the Dust Bowl and Depression days of Russell, Kansas, in the Thirties, and the constant admonition of his mother, Bina: "Can't never could do anything." Normally so disciplined and composed, Dole's voice cracked and that April Day in California, he wept before the television cameras of the world. You watched, transfixed and disbelieving. Something similar on the campaign trail, and he might at last turn tedium into passion - and prove that an old man's mission has a purpose.

An ideologically driven Republican revolution has swept Congress; yet the Republican poised to seek the White House is the least revolutionary of men

There was Ronald Reagan in 1980, and above all George Bush, the patrician Yale who bested him eight years ago - hence his abhorrence of Steve Forbes, another East Coast rich boy, touting nonsensical nostrums like a flat tax, for whom life has come too easy.

For Dole, of course, nothing has come easy, starting with the recovery of the use of his own body after the wounds of 1945. He is a creature of political Washington, yet is physically unable to participate in many of its favoured relaxations - tennis, golf, even the power lunch. He cannot cut a steak or tie shoelaces (hence the shiny black loafers he always wears). "A broken fingernail," he has said, "is a minor crisis." Perforce, his life

at home (once a fortnight, on average; these campaign days, never) is a pizza and a rented video. The Doles have an apartment in Florida which they sometimes visit. Most nights, though, are Senate business, fundraisers or party functions in the four corners of the United States.

Nobody understands the mechanics of politics better - the money that greases its wheels, the art of putting together a majority, and the law of a favour given, a favour returned. Certainly, over the decades, no one has sat before more helpings of rubber chicken, every one of them to further his ultimate ambition.

But ask Bob Dole why he wants to be pres-

Change our number plate? RU MAD?

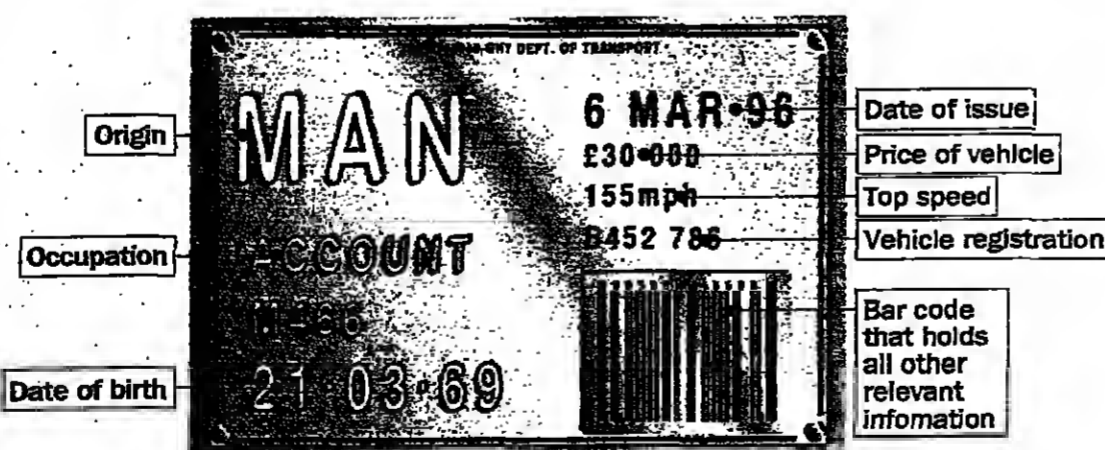
No matter how we register cars, the anorak element will remain, says Jonathan Glancey

Pick up a copy of *Exchange and Mart*, any copy, and turn to the voluminous used-car section. Under the makers' names - Ford, Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, Vauxhall - the small ads scream for attention under the imprint of ink-enslaved fingers: "E-reg, tidy motor, fish, genuine two owners", "G-reg, immaculate, always garaged, no canvassers", "K-reg, high-mileage, hence price, no time-wasters".

This alphabet soup spills down the columns of cars for sale, for the British car buyer, and motor trade, is clearly obsessed with registration plates. We scour the classified ads knowing our Fs from our Es, if not our Ps from our Qs. Q, by the way, is applied to cars bought abroad, while P may well be the last in the current series of alphabet-prefix British registration plates.

The Department of Transport, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) and the car industry are currently discussing the future of the number plate. From August 1997, it is likely that number plates will change on a quarterly rather than on the present annual basis. The reason is simply that the annual change in registration letters, which has taken place since January 1963 (shifting to August in 1967), has encouraged an upsurge of sales in a single month to the detriment of business during the rest of the year.

Buyers, it seems, must have the latest registration. Why buy an N-reg car on 31 July when you can improve your fellow car-dealer residents with a P-reg the very next day? This might sound silly, but when has our relationship with the car ever been rational? In the uncertain waters of the second-hand car business, the difference between



Road to lunacy? This hypothetical number plate lacks mother's maiden name but little else

an N and a P is a gulf in our imagination as wide as the English Channel. The former may be in better condition than the latter, yet, in most cases, it will be cheaper: all logic goes out of the window where registration plates are concerned.

That this is true is proved by the extremely silly prices car owners will pay for "personalised" plates. DVLA (the Swansea-based licensing authority) makes a small fortune for the Government by auctioning used-vehicle registration numbers at venues throughout Britain; to date, DVLA auctions have raised £100m, with individual bidders paying up to £20,000 for plates such as JG1.

To most of us, this is a form of madness; had enough being asked to pin a name-tag to our lapels at a conference without having to tell the world who we are when driving home. There

are, however, many motorists only too keen to manifest their monicker - pop stars, DJs, property developers and advertising execs only the loudest among them.

Most of us do not care one way or another, or not unless we are landed with a plate that makes us look even sillier than a pop star; there are some that include words like MOO or MUD, suitable for dairy farmers, perhaps, but surely not for us smart urban professionals (who would do better with SUP or YUP).

Even so, there are number plate games many of us (those with the child still in us) enjoy playing when driving abroad. In Italy, for example, you can keep passengers awake by asking them to play the guess-where-the-car-in-front-has-come-from game. NA stands for Naples, SI for Siena, VE for Verona and so on (cars registered in

the capital are less discreet, boasting a fully spelt-out ROMA). This is diverting, not least because we can construct fantasy lives about the Veronese or Neapolitan families swerving across our path in a foot-on-the-floor Fiat Cinquecento. We can learn to raise our fingers in crude response as Italian drivers do, and shout "typical Neapolitan" or "typical Roman", even if we have no idea what a typical Neapolitan or Roman is like.

The French opt, as one would expect, for a rational system of car registration based on the logical division of post-revolutionary France into geometric departments. Here, numbers rather than names are the rule - we know a Parisian by the code 75.

We tell Bavarians from Westphalians from stylish, information-packed German number plates, while

in the United States, we are offered a succinct character profile of individual states even before we cross the border - Florida, as many license plates brag, is the "Sunshine State" (promising lazy, hazy, crazy summer days) and Texas is the "Lone Star State", a law unto itself. Rhode Island plates carry the scary impression "Live free or die".

Run-of-the-mill British plates may appear to be arcane, yet they tell policemen, motor traders and the sad sort of person who collects street-lamp numbers where a car originally came from - NKX and PPP means the car is from Berkshire, while ABH is a car from Buckinghamshire. But you would never guess.

Now that our system of registration is about to change, what sort of number plates might we opt for? We could choose a pretty system like the Italians. Alternatively, we could plump for a supermarket-style bar code. Caught up in the world of instantly accessible information, we might go the whole hog and choose plates that tell the world who we are in no uncertain terms - name, city of origin (us and the car), occupation and blood group in case of accident. Or we could, as Americans already have (at extra cost), decide on unique scripted plates that tell it like it is: "I'm Mandy, fly me" is one I've seen in Texas, but I wouldn't be surprised to read some day in London's West End: "Let's do lunch", or in Leicestershire: "I'm a big cheese", or in Blackpool: "I've seen the lights." This might sound potty, but it would make each car memorable and easy to recover, while scanning the ads in *Exchange and Mart* would be a good deal more fun than it is now.

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Tel: (01395) 578222
Enquiries to Dr E. D. Svendsen, M.B.E.



I enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £
Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss _____
Address: _____
Post Code: _____

VS

STERLING		DOLLAR		D-MARK			
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	
US	1.5382	11-9	30-27	1.000	0-3	—	0.8782
Canada	2.0629	22-4	43-39	1.3688	0-3	—	1.0374
Germany	3.9224	35-2	57-53	1.6100	0-3	—	1.2822
France	7.7365	19-18	35-36	5.0066	28-28	42-122	4.0822
Italy	2.3542	66-84	20-28	1.6352	60-67	176-27	1.2259
Japan	161.50	16-15	238-21	16.02	44-43	132-122	127.10
UK	1.0254	5-5	54-49	1.2564	2-2	—	0.9130
Denmark	4.6553	2-1	30-24	3.2510	5-4	15-13	3.0542
ECU	3.7594	32-109	42-329	2.7340	44-24	76-55	2.3856
Netherlands	2.3330	67-58	106-101	1.6875	30-23	39-30	1.3155
Belgium	4.7170	10-10	34-30	3.4585	10-10	20-20	3.0700
Switzerland	3.4030	32-30	91-50	4.6496	30-10	20-20	3.0476
Norway	5.8840	39-49	15-12	2.9432	37-12	109-117	4.8122
Spain	16.038	11-7	38-39	1.2073	50-33	440-450	12.5894
Sweden	9.7227	62-57	38-39	6.8875	50-33	10-107	8.0732
Australia	1.9651	19-23	40-40	1.3106	2-21	54-56	1.8771
Hong Kong	1.1801	94-63	222-167	7.7327	2-21	5-25	0.8214
Malaysia	4.7875	10-10	25-20	2.5430	2-2	17-24	3.9274
New Zealand	2.2550	47-51	40-43	1.4892	30-32	38-34	1.9270
South Africa	5.7738	0-0	50-5	3.7306	2-2	10-10	2.8589

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	12960	0.9997	Nigeria	382821	55.7027
Australia	126058	10.4338	Oman	15877	0.3850
Brazil	15631	0.9213	Pakistan	223585	1.9586
China	272024	8.3329	Peru	410286	26.7020
Egypt	19847	4.0515	Portugal	226240	2.9310
France	10483	2.4966	Russia	74435	6.6477
Germany	284373	5.1030	Saudi Arabia	234093	43.9510
Greece	37010	240.450	South Africa	53991	2.9500
India	519023	34.0650	Taiwan	43798	27.3200
Italy	62594	1.0000	UAE	10008	37.9700

Source: Forward rates quoted as of 12:00 p.m. on a Thursday (except where noted). Rates quoted were for high end of a premium paid for 30-day rates. *Dollar rates quoted are approximate. For the week ending 12/10/92.

E Buys		I Buys		C Buys	
Australia (Dollars)	194,000	France (Francs)	74,960	New Zealand (Dollars)	2,230
Austria (Schillings)	153,000	Germany (Mark)	2,200	Hong Kong (Hong)	9,800
Belgium (Francs)	45,000	Germany (Deutschmarks)	366,000	Portugal (Escudos)	228,900
Canada (Dollars)	20,000	Hong Kong (Dollars)	18,200	Spain (Pesetas)	94,000
Cyprus (Pounds)	8,160	Indonesia (Rupiah)	1,000	Switzerland (Francs)	1,000
Denmark (Kroner)	6,500	Italy (Lira)	7,340,000	Sweden (Kronor)	1,700
Holland (Gulden)	2,400	Japan (Yen)	18,500	Turkey (Lira)	987,700
Ireland (Pounds)	6,900	Malaysia (Ringgit)	64,425	United States (Dollars)	14,925
	6,900				

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base	Discount	Prime	Discount
France	Lombard	5.00%	5.00%
Intervention	Casade	Fed Funds	Discount
Italy	Prime	Spain	Central
Discount	Discount	10-day Repo	Switzerland
Netherlands	Denmark	Sweden	Discount
			150%

Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	4%	7.26	8 1/4	8.66	Netherlands	5%	5.32	6%	6.52
US	5 1/8	6.02	5 1/4	6.36	Spain	6 1/4	6.76	8 1/4	9.16
Japan	6 1/4	5.57	7 1/4	6.26	Italy	6 1/4	6.06	8 1/4	8.76
Australia	6 1/4	8.59	6 1/4	6.26	Sweden	7 1/4	5.65	6 1/4	6.92
Germany	5 1/4	5.57	6%	6.45	Belgium	6%	6.23	6%	6.40
France	5 1/4	5.82	7 1/4	6.72	ECU OAT	7 1/4	6.62	7 1/4	7.22

Source: HSBC's European Research.
Yields computed on bond prices.
 * Excludes non-horizon

	O'night	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	5 1/4	8 1/2	0	0 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Sterling Cds			8 1/4	6 1/4	8 1/4	0 1/4
Local Authority Deps			0 1/4	6	5 1/2	0
Discount Market Deps	5 1/4	6				
Treasury Bills (90y)		5 1/4	5 1/2			
Dollar Cds			4 1/2	4 1/2	4 1/2	4 1/2
ECU Linked Dep			4 1/4	4 1/4	4 1/4	4 1/4

Contract	Settlement Price	High/Low	Est.Cnts	Open Interest		
Long Gt	(Mar 96)	105.22	107.23	105.17	65593	28143
German Bond	(Jan 96)	65.48	66.75	66.56	212438	250271
Long Gt	(Mar 96)	105.22	107.23	105.17	65593	28143
Italian Bond	(Jan 96)	100.67	101.98	103.50	54041	50642
3M Euro \$	(Mar 96)	93.67	93.96	93.90	27533	57382
3M Euro \$	(Mar 96)	93.90	94.14	94.00	71654	57382
3M Euro \$	(Mar 96)	94.63	95.70	95.63	100	13645
3M Euro \$	(Mar 96)	95.70	96.84	96.88	42560	25212
E.G.U.	(Mar 96)	95.37	95.41	95.35	888	6421
Long Sfr	(Mar 96)	95.45	95.45	95.45	100	5860
Long Sfr	(Mar 96)	98.28	98.30	98.24	1626	2840
Long Sfr	(Mar 96)	98.90	97.70	98.00	3880	32680
FRF 60	(Mar 96)	98.90	98.90	98.90	432	3912
FRF 60	(Mar 96)	90.30	90.42	90.27	83	26

Settlement price: 3708.0	closing offer price			Call/Put
Series	3650	3700	3760	3800
March	62/12	28/29	10/63	2/109
April	82/41	53/66	31/94	17/129
May	106/64	76/85	54/112	36/144
June	128/79	97/100	75/127	54/157

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London		Metal Exchange		LME Stocks		chg
\$/tonne	Cash	3 mths	Volume	12000	12000	
Aluminium H30-37	320-20	60078	701225	75200	-	540
Aluminium Alloy	345-56	396-82	8208	340325	-	4550
Copper A	700-5/4500	2575-78	10845	340325	-	101
Lead	787-08	776-77	15522	394510	-	785
Nickel	8045-25	8035-45	5681	8940	-	120
Tin	6070-80	6100-30	125-44	236800	-	162
Zinc	3900-81	3920-94	24981			

PRECIOUS METALS								
prn for /oz	\$	£	Coins	\$	£	\$	£	
Platinum	415.0	269.40	Britanna	410	266	Krugnards	386.92	253.61
Palladium	136.75	89.56	Britanna.5 oz	204	134	Sows	92.96	60.63
Silver spot	5.43	3.55	Britanna.25 oz	104	68	Nobles	402.78	264.78
Gold Bulln	386.80	248.77	Britanna.10 oz	52	34	Maple Leaf	397.410	260.69

Cocoa		Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Potatoes	
LCE	£/tonne	LCE	£/tonne	LCE	£/tonne	LCE	£/tonne	A/A	£/tonne
Mar	880	Mar	1825	Mar	17750	Mar	17850	Apr	305
May	908	May	1829	May	10730	Apr	18050	May	332
July	931	July	1759	Sept	10650	May	22500	Jun	348
		Sept				May		Jul	358

LOC	Station	LOC	Station	LOC	Station	LOC	Station	LOC	Station	LOC	Station	LOC	Station
May	37780	Mar	7190	Feb	1638	Mar	1715		H-10	Send			
Aug	5820	May	7190	Mar	1457	May	1745	Mar	383.25-388.00	39150			
Oct	32320	Jul	7190	Vol	272	July	1755	May	390.50-388.25	387.25			
Vol	1,179	Vol	0	Index	1289	Vol	409	Jul	382.75-378.75	379.50			

Source: OAS

Apr	18.24	-0.06	1788	Mar	16.50	-2.00	Apr	16.30	Loaded Gasoline	163.168
May	17.33	-0.25	1758	Apr	16.10	-0.25	May	16.65	Naphtha	172.174
Jun	16.81	-0.03	1735	May	15.75	-0.25	Jun	16.05	EC Gasol	165.168
Vol:	30,601		Index:	18.41	Vol:	11,653	Jul	17.05	Heavy Fuel Oil	103.105

commodity	base date	+ export	today	1 yr	dec 31/87	% vs 1 yr ag	year ago	% yr chg
Iron	1970=100	194.74	-0.94	203.50	-4.50	178.66	+10.34	
Agricultural	1970=100	294.98	+1.12	287.75	+1.15	249.47	+14.70	
Energy	1983=100	66.17	-2.47	71.31	-7.21	57.38	+9.33	
Industrial Metals	1977=100	165.13	+0.22	163.32	-4.25	169.45	-7.19	
Livestock	1970=100	175.67	+0.45	182.71	-3.65	183.06	-4.02	

Stock	Bid	Mid	Offer	Stock	Bid	Mid	Offer
Abbey Life Managed 54	256.7		7801	London Life Mixed	663.30		

All-Star Multiple Investments	164.6	122.58	NFP Manager	3814	4367
Allied Dunbar Managed	124.9	133.6	Realised Growth Managed	1254	1773
AXA E&L Balanced 36	81.1	86.1	NFI Mutual Bond	1338	1429
AXA E&L Bond 36	82.4	87.7	Northen Union	1194	125.7
Banque Paribas Bond	72.9	78.4	Northen Union	1554.6	1624.0
Banque Managed	56.6	63.1	Northen Union Managed Life	64.89	173.56
Banc Horse Int Sec2	657.7	902.88	NPI Manager	5003	598.7

CLUS Managed	3739	3699	Prudentest Ast Income Managed	4001	4768
CLUB Managed \$185	3141	3649	Prudentist Ast Income S2	5280	5789
Colonial Mutual Managed	44259	46631	Refuge Managed S1	4805	5652
Confederation Managed S4	4916	398.9	Reliance Managed	4767	4965
Conital Managed	40396	1645	Royal Hart Op Income Dist	1423	286
Crown Managed	6191	7147	Royal Life Managed	7470	46498
CU Prime Managed	4560	4790	Royal Scottish Crown Managed	1654	1965
CUS Managed	4264	7981	Royal S. & O. Managed	4001	4768

Pr. COO Versum's Holdings	4604	9552	Scottish Life Holdings	3752	3455
French Prov. Managed	3990	3678	Scottish Mutual Growth	2673	2814
GA Managed	2386	2510	Scottish Prov. Ass. Ret. Gm Mgt	9306	8800
GA Managed	2528	2573	Scottish Prov. Inst. Managed	3715	3280
Gm Foreign & Colonial	1875	1875	Scottish Widows Invest	6020	5444
Gm Managed	3470	3553	Standa. Balanced Managed	4383	4913
Gm Intl. Sell \$1	2457	2587	Standa. Fxd Managed	2417	2575
		2447			

HR Services Manager	8253	8650	Sun Alliance Indemnity	7633	8294
HR Services Manager	8668	7358	Sun Alliance Pk Investment A	4018	
HR Services Manager	2268	2367	Sun Alliance PH Health Assure		
Health Life Global Manager	6342	6888	Sun Life Manager	7856	8240
J Rothschil MSO Manager	8253	1977	Sun Life/Cam Manager	4387	4436
J Rothschil Scot Amc Manager	1491	1978	Teachers Manager	3992	4302
J Rothschil T James Manager	1769	8813	TSB Homeowner	2003	2761
J Rothschil Wm P Manager	0923	6413	TSB Manager		2666

Lincoln Nat American	1725	1815	Windsor Investor Unit	3980	4447
Lincoln Nat Managed J	5278	5483	Windsor Nat Key Managed	3959	4080
Lincoln Nat Managed 4	3525	3783	Windsor Nat Key Managed	6718	6789
Lincoln Nat Schroders 32	6618	6851	Windsor Nat Key Managed	6317	6583
			Woodward Life Managed		154

— — — — —

100

Dollar			Spot
	1 month	3 months	
1200	—	—	0.9782
13688	0-3	0-5	0.9272
14836	26-24	57-52	1.0071
50866	48-48	105-103	1.0404
86613	60-67	175-167	1.0511
95382	24-43	152-122	1.73289
125066	2-4	5-6	1.0230
70350	4-14	15-13	1.0448
57790	34-24	74-65	1.18642
1567	29-29	98-93	0.956
15986	1-3	1-2	1.029
64496	35-10	50-40	0.9403
29482	37-42	129-117	1.0372
63873	89-83	144-140	1.0384
120353	38-36	107-107	0.9873
13376	39-21	54-56	1.0172
77387	9-12	35-31	1.0201
255420	4-14	60-50	1.1754
14882	30-32	88-90	0.9977
17736	—	5-4	1.0230
14085	3-10	103-88	0.9494

Swaption	7.7%	5.65	6.1%	6.92
Deutsche	1	122	6%	320
SDU (AT)			6.1%	700

*Prices calculated on bond basis. ** German new birthright

ates

	1 Month	2 Months	6 Months	1 Year
6 1/4	5 7/8	5 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
6 1/2	6 1/8	6 1/4	6 1/2	6 1/2
6 3/4	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 3/4	6 3/4
5 3/4	5 1/2	4 3/4	5 1/2	5 1/2
4 3/4	4 1/2	4 1/2	4 3/4	4 3/4

utures

High/Low for day	Est/Conts traded	Open Interest
107-23	105-17	15503
106-76	105-16	214383
106-63	106-03	781-01
101-38	101-58	542-01
103-96	103-50	573-92
94-14	93-07	719-65
95-70	95-63	175-40
95-84	95-68	426-92
95-41	95-35	825
95-57	95-31	105-80
98-30	98-24	204-07
377-60	368-44	326-81
420-01	430-01	32
90-42	90-27	278-62

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Shipping offer prices			Total/pts	
37000	\$750	3800	Cat/p	
292/23	73/85	2/199	stcr	
53/66	31/94	17/123	IRA	
76/95	54/112	36/144		
97/100	73/127	54/157		

Exchange		L&E		chg	
3 mins	Volume	1000	1000		
1000	500	5000	+	540	
500	500	34000	+	450	
2575	10045	1000	+	50	
1000	77677	1000	+	10	
67045	1600	30045	+	792	
67030	10544	800	+	100	
67034/34	34000	67000	+	100	
\$4	\$4	Trade volumes & change in			
1000	1000	prices on 15 Friday & 16 June			

	\$	£	\$	£
#0	269	Knights	390/90	23/61
#1	204	34	500	32/61
#2	194	60	400/10	25/24
#3	52	34	300/40	20/69

Source: Spot & 1-M

Potatoes		Potatoes	
tonne	L&E	tonne	L&E
10750	1000	10750	300
10750	400	10750	300
10650	300	10650	300
7	100	10650	300

Wheat		Corn	
tonne	L&E	tonne	L&E
10750	1000	10750	300
10750	400	10750	300
10650	300	10650	300
7	100	10650	300

1000 Pounds
Change in price

18

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positions. I think this is a new dimension which will add a great deal to the excitement. I have to admit that I never really felt comfortable with the Friday qualifying session because you would have to your best but you wouldn't know if that was going to be good enough 24 hours later. Now it's a one-shot situation which gives every driver the opportunity to channel all his ability and aggression into a more concentrated action-packed on-hour session.

It's true to say that, at this time each year, you go into the championship with a clean slate. The 1995 and 1996 is no different, particularly as I can draw on a more comprehensive bank of experience. I'm in a better position to enjoy my racing and, come the 16th and final grand prix in Japan in October, I want to have achieved something I can be really proud of. I think I can really do that. Here's to an exciting and memorable season.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

though I was the best heavy in the world, I had the best chin in the world. [My] Cooper wasn't fit to kick me in the nadsow. I have never been aced. Joe Bagner, former British super-middleweight champion on the comeback trail.

We've him a clubber's chance. He expects rabbit-punching, so one of us is going to get a rabbit punch in the eye next night. Lesmond Lewis kept Bruno's chances of holding the Wluchak title at the Village in the Bronx County Courthouse at a minimum by saying at the marriage is that he's so big no massive I can't miss him and throwing punches with bad intention. That puts Frank in a no-win situation. Mike Tyson.

ball seemed to run for me and I made it. I had a game like this only comes along once in a while. In the mood. Then Richard King Inspiration against Scotland. Five Nations' Championship Saturday.

The first half, Matt United were entered O-O. Kevin Kwaner, Seattle Union player, reflects that it might have been in the circumstances a match which would have been lost 1-0.

I can say is that I met to bring it to a conclusion. I hope the referee may be as big an idiot. Referee Marcello Cope who abandoned an Italian Sec-division match in the 85th minute, after a punt for the Italian win a 12 billion lire fortune, national police system.

League could not prohibit re-sales in Alaska. Nien Arruthe American Association of Rugby League, dismisses proposals by the Rugby League to run Super League in Australia.

I couldn't treat my dog the way I have been treating him. I have been having the blame at my door for letting him out of the washing machine down to the supposedly degrading level of the doghouse. Striker Steve Claridge's point at Birmingham after finally getting his on-off £1.2m move completed.

Team on Wagon

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SPORT

Gullit and Jones on collision course

Football

GUY HODGSON

There is no pay-per-view, yet, for the quarter-finals of the FA Cup which does not mean the last four allowed to dream of twin towers will not be decided without cost. On what should be a showpiece day for football's glamour competition the action is diluted to quarter strength.

At most only one semi-final will be discovered today and while the weather has been responsible for Tottenham Hotspur and Nottingham Forest having to play out the drizzle of the fifth round, the chief culprit for the lack of action, as ever, is television.

The tie of the round, Leeds United versus Liverpool, is played tomorrow while Manchester United do not meet Southampton until Monday night which means the only quarter-final today will be Chelsea against Wimbledon.

The words short and changed come to mind for some reason. Wimbledon were quoted as 20/1 for the Cup yesterday which represents good value as they won at Chelsea in the Premiership earlier this season and caused them considerable problems in the dress rehearsal at Selhurst Park last week. It is a measure of the confidence running through the visitors that Dean Holdsworth, their top scorer in the League, will probably be on the bench after recovering from flu.

There is also the potentially explosive mixture of Chelsea's Ruud Gullit and Wimbledon's Vinnie Jones on the same pitch which passed without incident last week but is unlikely to do so for two matches running. Jones, it should be remembered, was sent off for fouling the Dutchman earlier in the season and then was fined for making derogatory remarks about him.

At White Hart Lane, the identity of the team to play host to Aston Villa in the sixth round on Wednesday could rest on the fitness of Nottingham Forest's

Stuart Pearce and Tottenham's Chris Armstrong. The former has a sore calf, the latter an ankle injury.

Pearce made his comeback in Tuesday's UEFA Cup quarter-final against Bayern Munich after missing eight matches with a calf strain and although he was limping through the final stages of the game, he has shown a great improvement over the last 48 hours.

Gerry Francis, the Spurs manager, would certainly prefer it if he did not play. "Stuart obviously means so much to them," he said. "That's why they shoved him straight back in, as soon as he physically could, for a big match like that one in Munich."

If Leeds had a choice they would probably rather face Liverpool without Stan Collymore, particularly as the £8.5m striker has a slight injury to exercise at Elland Road. When the clubs met in August he had to be carried off after a foul that should have yielded a penalty. To add insult to injury Tony Yeboah later won that game with an explosion of a shot from 25 yards.

Steve McManaman, Liverpool's midfielder, agreed that result still rankled even if a 5-0 win in the return at Anfield was adequate revenge. "We're playing very well and we're confident where ever we go," he said. "Everyone's enjoying themselves and the two up front can't stop scoring so I don't see why we can't win."

One of the striking duo, of course, is Collymore. While attention is on the Cup there is a significant day in the Premiership where struggling Middlesbrough, Coventry and Queens Park Rangers will be desperate for points as they travel to West Ham, Everton and Aston Villa respectively.

The Brazilian Branco is likely to make his first start for Middlesbrough as they hope to arrest their post-Christmas decline of one point from 11 games while, at Goodison, Marc Hottiger is set to make his Everton debut after the Government's change in the work permit law allowed his move from Newcastle to go through.

Swiss signing for City

Manchester City have added a Swiss-born Italian to their list of foreigners by signing Giuseppe Mazarrelli from FC Zurich.

The midfielder impressed during a reserve match for City on Wednesday and convinced the City chairman, Francis Lee, to give him a chance. But the deal is subject to assorted clauses and means that 22-year-old Mazarrelli has until the end of the season to prove his worth.

A fee has been agreed but it is a lot of money so it could be subject to us being con-

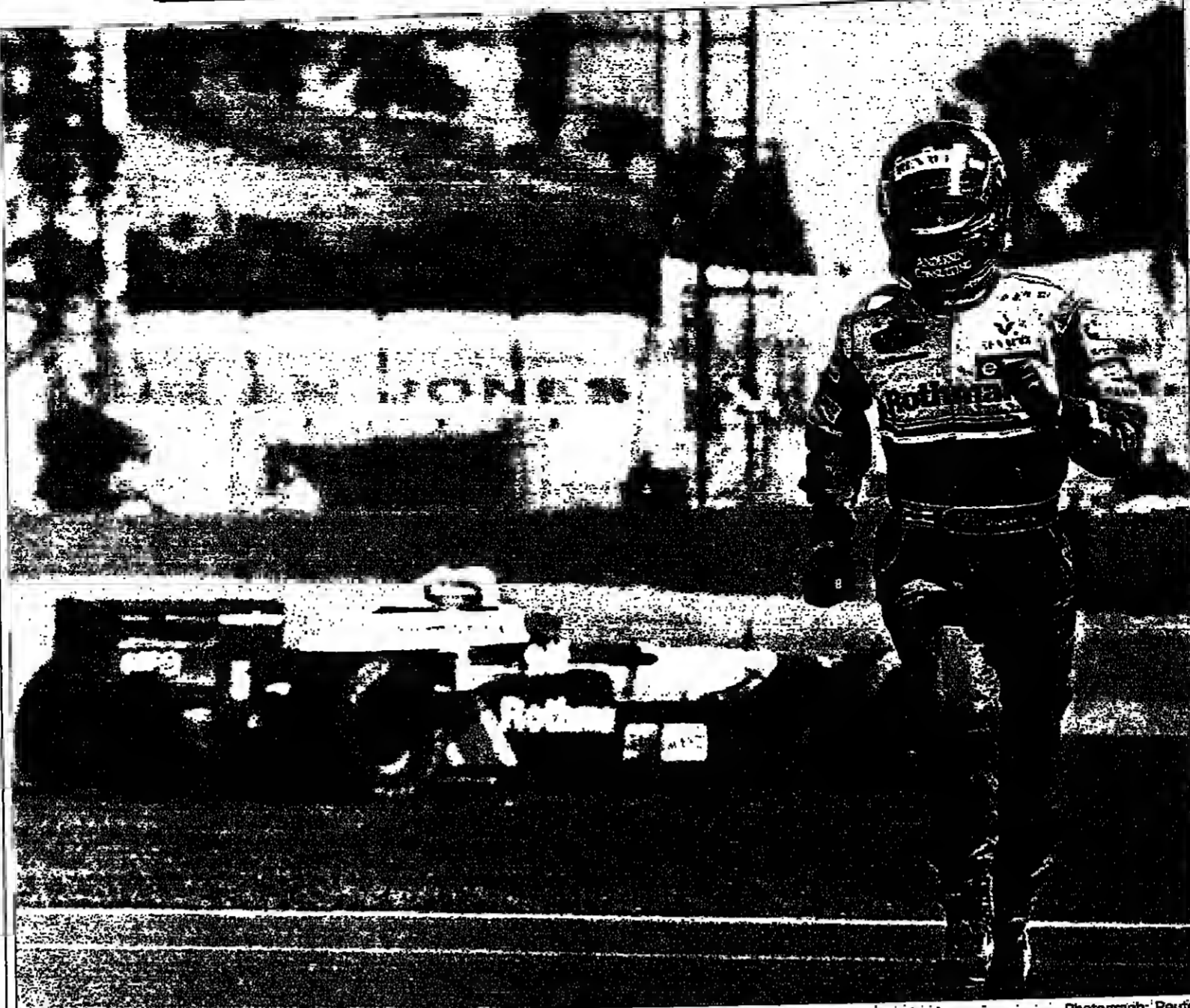
vinced he is the quality player we think he is," Lee said. "We have only watched him in one reserve game and we will have to wait a little longer to see his qualities. But I have no doubt having seen him play that he is a player of terrific skills and great quality and he will not let us down."

The Georgian striker Mikhail Kavelashvili has returned to the Russian champions, Spartak Vladikavkaz, to think over a £1m move after training with City last week.



BACK IN THE SADDLE

Chris Boardman talks to Ian Stafford on his cycling comeback 26



Hot foot: Damon Hill sprints away after spinning off during an otherwise successful practice session in Melbourne yesterday

Photograph: Reuters

Hill's timely show of strength

Motor racing

DAVID TREMAYNE reports from Melbourne

Damon Hill took back the initiative from his upstart teammate, Jacques Villeneuve, yesterday as the two Williams-Renaults continued to dominate practice for the Australian Grand Prix, but neither driver placed too much importance on their performance.

There was a curious lack of tension on another day of unofficial testing, as Melbourne continued its laborious advance on today's official qualifying, which will decide grid positions. Hill said: "Tomorrow is what matters. What we did today is useful, but ultimately won't help me start from the front row."

Villeneuve echoed the sentiment, claiming not to have gone for an all-out effort. The drivers were reserving their energies for the first of the new-style one-

hour qualifying shoot-outs introduced under new regulations for 1996.

Jean Alesi complained of a lack of front-end grip but was the closest challenger in his Benetton-Renault, while the world champion, Michael Schumacher, improved after a troubled start on Thursday. He was fastest of all in the morning, with his team-mate, Eddie Irvine, third, but though they dropped to fourth and seventh respectively in the afternoon the German was satisfied that the Italian team had made significant progress. He was, however, cautious.

"The situation is that we have had no real test running, as far as developing the car is concerned. We have been able to do a little bit of work to sort out the problems we have encountered, but there are still little things which you have to change and make reliable. We are pretty much on schedule, but we are not in a position now to think about good results and finishing

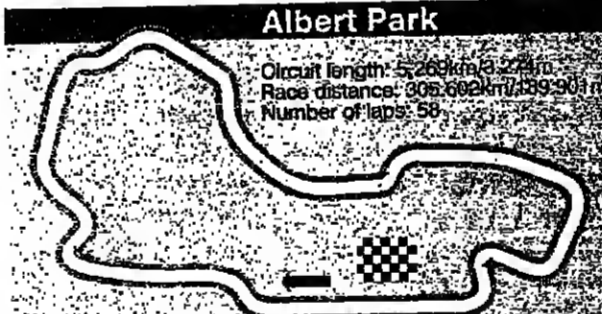
aces. We haven't done a proper race simulation with the new car, so it would probably be a bit of a surprise if everything goes in the normal way."

The team's progress is nevertheless regarded as highly promising for future races, given

"If I'm having a hard time in a race then I'm going to look up at the end of it and I wouldn't be a competitive person if I didn't get cheered off. But I want to enjoy this championship."

DAMON HILL writes for the Independent, page 27

en Williams' markedly greater test mileage, and Schumacher added: "It's exactly what I expected when I came to Ferrari. I'm pleased about the principal situation. The base is all right. There are a lot of areas potentially we can build on. I predicted that the gap to the front row teams was going to be around a second - which it is right now."



Albert Park Circuit length: 5.268km Race distance: 306.222km (59.9 laps) Number of laps: 59

Cable gets in on Bruno act

Boxing

NICK DUXBURY

In a low blow aimed at BSKyB's pay-per-view stranglehold on the Bruno-Tyson world heavyweight title fight, the cable station Live TV are to give its viewers the contest for free.

The station, known for its man-in-a-rabbit-costume "News Bunny", will be showing a blow-by-blow "reconstruction" of next Sunday's 4am confrontation in Las Vegas. Boxers Terry Dixon and Damien Caesar will copy the moves and play the parts of "Big Frank" and "Iron Mike" in a makeshift ring 24 floors up at Live's Canary Wharf studios in London.

The stunt is an attempt to undermine BSKyB, who are charging up to £14.95 for exclusive footage of what is being billed as the fight of the century. And Live are offering a bonus, for Britain's Bruno, who is no stranger to pantomime, will retain his title no matter what.

Just like in the best soap, the 1.25 million homes with access to Live are guaranteed a happy ending because any unpalatable outcome will be re-enacted, with our man hang-

ing on to his World Boxing Council crown.

Using radio and TV feeds from European sources, the two substitute fighters will be given instructions by a dinner-jacketed ringside expert on every step of the action 4,000 miles away at the MGM Grand. At the end of each round, two pundits will discuss the make-believe fight's progress.

Sound effects will add to the "realism", and Live - run by Kelvin MacKenzie of "Freddie Starr Ate My Hamster" headline fame while editor of the Sun - has gone to the trouble of matching the physiques of its punching players with Bruno and Tyson. "They will be hitting each other," Ruth Settle, a spokeswoman for Live TV said, "but I'm not sure how hard."

Chris Johnson, Live's Head of Sport, is playing the part of defender of the little man, The mock-up, he said, was "for the thousands of people who can't or won't fork out the extra money to see the fight. You can't deprive the nation of this unique moment in British sporting history". In the fight for publicity, Live TV - like Bruno - can't lose.

Confident Collins, page 24

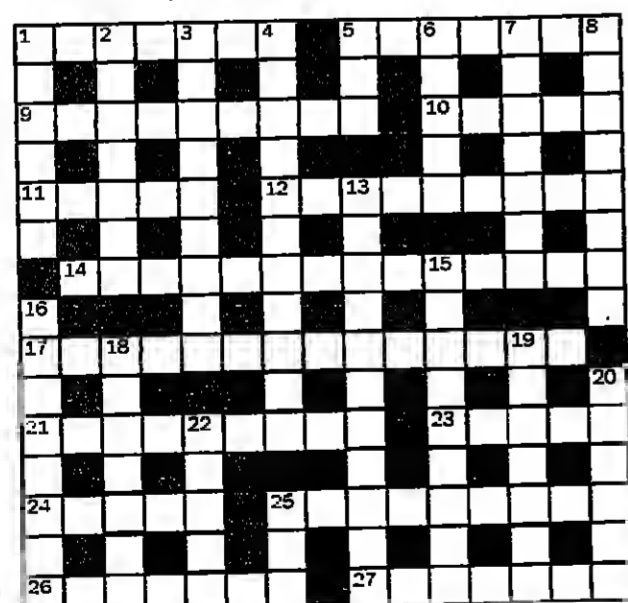
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No.2930, Saturday 9 March

By Mass

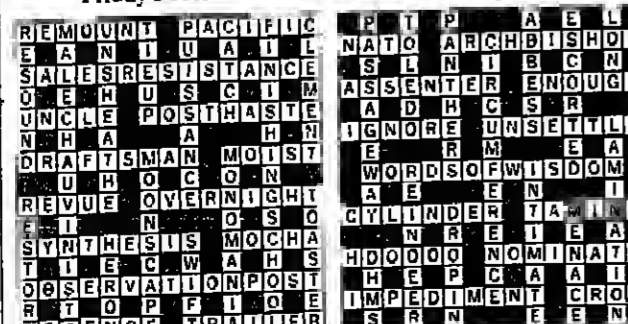
ACROSS

DOWN



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



- 1 Crash left vehicle rolling into river (7)
- 5 Tough spot needs right gouging tool (7)
- 9 Declining a call to the bar? (9)
- 10 Reportedly associated with a Greek character (5)
- 11 Working with one acting head (5)
- 12 Surveys in lots of papers covering Italy (9)
- 14 Course starters? (14)
- 17 Area of formality in veteran jockey's engagement (14)
- 21 Dealt with arch crumbling in place of worship (9)
- 23 Content quietly overlooked in contract (5)
- 24 Holder of ace squeezing West (5)
- 25 Left in NE fort, in terrible scene of battle (5,4)
- 26 Time for mixed duets, yes? (7)
- 27 Name for man - one inside, committed (7)

- 1 Fury? Military type's lost none (6)
- 2 Form of protection? So it might appear in embargo (7)
- 3 Patronising types (9)
- 4 Something of a space-filler for a newspaper, perhaps? (7,4)
- 5 Conventional carriage (3)
- 6 They tend to appear out of focus? (5)
- 7 Your life's in your own hands, she'll tell you (7)
- 8 Goons among others mostly in review (8)
- 13 Cranky choleric quail, sore about note (11)
- 15 Create a cushy job, perhaps (9)
- 16 Withdraw round lake as precaution against raid (8)
- 18 It's great, one figures, in Newcastle? (7)
- 19 True energy is internal in effect (7)
- 20 Go over weak point (6)
- 22 The German's about, climbing fell (5)
- 25 Cook, the Quaker (3)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Larousse Dictionary of Literary Characters. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Mr R. Smith, North Humberston; G.A. Bentley, Chesham; Lesley Sharrod, Frizington, Cumbria; Alan Rafter, Swanscombe; Blinda Large, Eps, Suffolk.

TORONTO WITH NIAGARA

BA 747 from Heathrow to Toronto on 23 May, 11 Aug, 30 Aug or 14 Sept. • five nights at the deluxe Sheraton • city tour • harbour cruise • Niagara with helicopter • Phantom of the Opera • Concorde supersonic to Heathrow £1,999 or £2,999 with O.E. and QE2 cruise to New York

QE2 AND ORIENT-EXPRESS

Orient-Express to Southampton on 8 May • five night QE2 cruise to Southampton via Le Havre (for Paris) • Orient-Express to Victoria £1,099

Concorde supersonic to Brussels on 21 June • two night QE2 cruise to Southampton via Le Havre (for Paris) • Orient-Express to Victoria £1,099

Concorde supersonic to Reykjavik on 8 July • nine night QE2 Land of the Midnight Sun cruise to the Norwegian Fjords • Orient-Express from Southampton to Victoria £2,499

MONACO GRAND PRIX

Eurostar or fly to Paris on 18 May • city tour • overnight at Nikko Hotel • Concorde supersonic to Nice • reserved seat for Monaco Grand Prix • return to Gatwick £1,299

ORIANA AND ORIENT-EXPRESS

Concorde supersonic to Marrakesh on 29 July • six night Oriana cruise from Casablanca via Praia da Rocha, Lisbon and La Coruna • Orient-Express from Southampton to Victoria £1,999

Orient-Express to Southampton on 31 Aug • six night Oriana cruise to Monte Carlo via Gibraltar and Livorno (for Florence) • Concorde from Nice to Heathrow £1,999

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مكتبة الأمل

The Independent Weekend



John Travolta, the man and his movies Interview, page 3



THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

REVISIT Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen is the hottest thing since the Aga Khan. To the BBC's adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, if you missed it, are in need of a quick fix of Colin Firth in those breeches, you can see all 314 minutes of this glorious 35mm on the big screen at the National Film Theatre. At £10.50 it's the bargain of the week. ■ Saturday from 2pm, NFT, London SE1 (0171-928-2252)

DINE Dad's Army-style

Fans will remember that Clive Dunn played the local butcher Corporal Jones, so it's wholly appropriate that he should be flying in specially to join the grocer and short-tempered ARP warden Bill Pertwee for tonight's celebrity-studded cabaret and four-course dinner in aid of Comic Heritage. Fun and food guaranteed. ■ £30 including dinner, from Comic Heritage (0181-348 1187)

SEE Yeats

The life of painter Jack Yeats was a great deal more interesting than simply being the brother of the more famous WB Yeats. A new exhibition spans everything from his early works to his bold, expressionist late canvases which cemented his reputation as one of the foremost Irish painters of the 20th century. ■ Manchester City Art Gallery, Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun 2pm-5.30pm

TRAVEL Through Time

This is your chance to have an out-of-body experience thanks to the Forbidden Science Weekend. The Laskovskiy box generates electrical energy similar to that produced in thunderstorms. Tony Bassett demonstrates its many uses, including, he says, time travel. ■ CCA, 350 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow (0141-332 0522). Day ticket £5, £2 concs

RENT Dolores Claiborne

Who would have believed that Stephen King would have been the man behind this cracking film noir crossed with an old-fashioned women's picture? Jennifer Jason Leigh, Kathy Bates and Judy Parfitt deliver the goods in a film that makes you forgive its director, Randal Kleiser, for making *The Blue Lagoon* and *Grease*, and that's saying something. ■ On general release

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picture story



Fans watch the England v South Africa match in Rawalpindi, in which England were beaten. Attendance at games has been irrepressible. 45,000 tickets for the Pakistan vs India quarter-final in Bangalore were sold in three hours — many camped on the streets overnight

Win or lose, England's batsmen can normally expect little more than astonishment or shrugged shoulders from their fans. Things couldn't be more different for the Pakistanis. The World Cup holders can rely on fanatical support from every quarter. Today they face India, their deadliest enemy. Next Sunday, the final will be hosted on home soil. The atmosphere is, not surprisingly, highly charged. Tom Pilston caught the mood in Lahore and Rawalpindi last week



Those millions who cannot get in to see the games live are glued to their radios for fast-action commentary

THE STATE OF PLAY



Above: throughout the sub-continent, impromptu games of cricket are organised on whatever open ground can be found. Here, teams form outside a mosque in the old quarter of Lahore. Left: Never underestimate the power of the crowd. The hurricane alert effect achieved when 30,000 fans drummed empty water bottles against their seats in Karachi put bowler Waqar Younis in his stride against the English team. Right: spied in a public park — it looks like freeze-tag, has elements of baseball, but is it cricket?



فکرانہ

He's back. And he's hungry

The early promise. The overnight success. The lean (and flabby) years. The comeback. The chocolate cake. The John Travolta story has it all. By Sheila Johnston



"I need something to eat," John Travolta is saying. An aide rushes over, quickly to click shut the door of his suite on this small display of star displeasure. But not before he can be heard adding, in a measured and eminently reasonable tone of voice, "Everything I've had here since yesterday morning has been unacceptable..." His cutting, convey the strong impression that Travolta prefers to meet the press in restaurants over a damn fine lunch. A colleague who interviewed him a couple of years ago for the *Independent on Sunday* boggled while he ordered a chocolate ice-cream, chocolate truffle cake in raspberry sauce and a chocolate mousse with whipped cream, and proceeded to devour the lot. When he is holed up in a hotel doing conveyor-belt publicity, there are always the consolations of room service. Usually. But now the door reopens to eject a trolley laden with plates whose gleaming silver cloches conceal doubtless inedible substances. It's 11am and he's starved.

Not that Travolta is probably being picky; we are in Germany, land of unacceptable nosh. And not that he's being in the teeniest bit unpleasant. At this year's Berlin Film Festival he might be at the centre of a media maelstrom, but he is conducting himself with unflinching courtesy and composure. At the next day's press conference, someone takes the floor with a carefully prepared *hot mot*: "You once made *Saturday Night Fever*, Herr Travolta. Are you in a FEVER of excitement now that your new film is being shown here this SATURDAY?" There is a chorus of catcalls and groans at the asinine question, but Herr Travolta drowns them out, magically transforms them into warm applause, as he replies with his dazzling smile, "Ich bin ein Berliner," and says with apparent sincerity that he is honoured and delighted to be present.

Two or three things without which no Travolta piece is quite complete. Humble origins: father a former semi-pro football player, later the proprietor of the Travolta Tire Shop in suburban New Jersey. Mother in show business: an acting coach. John the youngest of six children, with two brothers and three sisters who nicknamed him Bone because he was so long and lean. That was before he could

walk. Aged six, he informed his mom that if she didn't make him a chocolate pudding, he would cut off his weenie (she made the pudding) and has never looked back since.

Plane-crazy since a tender age and now the owner of three jets, a Vampire, a Lear and a Gulfstream II. A committed disciple of Scientology for nearly 20 years, and for which (alarming to) he today seems a brilliant advertisement. First love Diana Hyland, an actress 18 years his senior, who played his mother in a 1976 television film; a year later, she died in his arms (of cancer), leaving him devastated. "Outed" as gay, along with a number of other luminaries four or five years ago, though since his marriage to the actress Kelly Preston, with whom he has a small son, those rumours have fizzled away.

Classic helter-skelter Hollywood career, from overnight phenomenon (*Saturday Night Fever*, *Grease*) to basing in a matter of movies. Conventional wisdom has it that he chose badly and certainly, in the mid-Eighties, there were some frightful duds. Still, these things seem more obvious with hindsight: *Arthur*, *Splash* and *An Officer and a Gentleman* might have kept Travolta bankable, but forgive me if I fail to see that he missed out on a string of masterpieces when he passed on them in favour of films like Brian De Palma's *Blow Out*. Travolta's *Arthur* is a lost opportunity I can comfortably live without. Then Tarantino, *Pulp Fiction*, Oscar nomination: he instantly acquired the affectionate nickname The Comeback Kid. And it seemed everyone was pleased to see him in town again.

In Berlin he is accompanying *Get Shorty*, based on Elmore Leonard's satirical novel about Chili Palmer, a small-time loan shark (Travolta) who comes to Hollywood and launches himself successfully on a second career in the movie business. Asked earlier whether he had had any brushes with the Mob in Hollywood, Danny DeVito, the film's producer/co-star, had flannelled that he'd never experienced or even heard of "this kind of money-laundering thing". To the same question, Travolta promptly replies (even though, as a non-producer, he is far less likely to have come across dodgy dealings): "My brother [Joey] had done some independent films financed by... who

knows? That's the only close-to-reality I know of that whole world. I'd say, 'How much is it being done for?' 'Oh, we're gonna do the whole movie for \$200,000.' 'And where are you getting the money?' 'Someone in Las Vegas.' 'Oh' - he mimes slowly dawning awareness - 'I see. I get it...'

There does not seem to be much place for *style* in the broad and open steps of the Travolta mindspace. One remembers a diary he wrote for *Rolling Stone* magazine while playing a (Rolling Stone) reporter in one of his Eighties flops, *Perfect*. "I'm not sure if Jamie Lee [Curtis, his co-star] wants to make love to me or not," he confided to millions of readers. "It would be nice, but I'm getting cross-signals at this point... I get the feeling she would want it to be genuine, but that she gets confused when the time is right. I'm more comfortable being seduced by a woman the first time, and she doesn't know that." That degree of candour is, to say the least, rare in a Hollywood megastar, and rather disarming.

He's often cast as a bad boy and has just played two gangsters on the trot (Why? "Offers I couldn't refuse," he shoots back instantly), although, he also points out, the two characters are very different beasts; they just have "a similar profession", as he quaintly puts it. "I don't think the man in *Get Shorty* would tolerate the man in *Pulp Fiction* for more than five minutes. Because he's a drug addict, he's unprofessional. Unpredictable. He might be appealing but he's a loose cannon. Chili could smell that, just like he could smell everybody in Hollywood."

But these two hard nuts share a sweetness - an innocence, almost - and a vulnerability, qualities at the very core of the Travolta appeal: even when playing a bad guy, you have to warm to him. Chili's Achilles' heel is that he's a helpless movie buff - one scene finds him in a half-empty cinema entranced by a revival of Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil*, mouthing the lines along with the characters. "He's tough, he's real, he's smart, but his love for the movies is like a 12-year-old's. That's what makes him interesting. I fought for the childlike quality in him; it wasn't originally in there. I said, 'Please: if you don't see why he loves the movies

so much, you're going to miss a potential for this character that's enormous. All I need is three or four moments. So they wrote the cinema scene and a couple of others. Like, I beat a guy up and then I find out he's a stunt man and ask him what movies he's been in. You just need a few things like that to colour a character and give him an arc."

Travolta talked with the real Chili Palmer on whom Leonard based his character, but says he did not attempt to imitate the man. "He was quite different than I anticipated. I met him during the movie and I was glad I didn't before because I may have picked up some choices that wouldn't have been right for how I interpreted it. He's very straightforward." And now Travolta springs to his feet. His body goes ramrod stiff, his large, slightly greying head is tilted straight and slightly upward, his voice rises a half-octave into a high, nasal, monotone whine. "Down in Miami, yeah, we were down there and this guy come up and I punched him..." Chili had an unusual personality, nothing that would have been transferable to the screen.

The sudden transformation is funny, impressive and a little uncanny, but Travolta makes acting sound like pure simplicity. "I study the character in as many details as I can get. I physicalise him until the thinkingness [sic] comes together. There's a moment when everything you say comes out exactly like he would say it. The way you dress, the way you smoke, the way you speak, the way you walk. When it's all automatic, at that moment you know: it's happened. Then, once you've got one character down and you're certain what he's about, it's very easy to start working on another. Characters have their own lives, you know. I could bring you three or four characters this minute."

Travolta will be needing that ability, for his dance card is full for quite a while to come. Next month we will see him in John Woo's *Broken Arrow*, a piece of enjoyable pyrotechnical bunkum that allows him to indulge his passion for flying as a maverick Air Force major who steals an 800mph plane with two nuclear warheads on board. It's scarcely an acting stretch, but he obviously has a ball playing a double-dyed (but still, inevitably, somehow likeable) villain.

"John [Woo] wanted him very stylish, he wanted him to smoke, then I had to mix that in with psycho... psycho... psychoses? if you will." He stumbles over the word, ending on a rising, questioning inflection.

"I remembered some military types I had met when I was younger, who were warmongers, articulate and calm but scary, and I incorporated a lot of that. I went to some bases and watched how they moved. It wasn't hard. I got to pontificate and order people around and smoke cigarettes a lot. My big fight stuff was at the beginning and end. Most of it was being nuts, know what I mean? I had the fun part."

There is more: over the next year or so we should see him in *White Man's Burden*, a satire based on the premise that blacks are the privileged class in society and whites the underdogs; *Phenomenon*, a fantasy in which he plays a small-town guy who becomes a genius after being struck by lightning; *Michael*, a comedy directed by Nora Ephron; and a film with Roman Polanski, *The Double*. Plus, further down the line, a project with Sharon Stone and a political thriller called *Dark Horse*. His combined salaries for this little lot are said to exceed \$40m.

As I leave, a trolley arrives groaning with fresh rations: time for a quick pit stop before the next session. He has his own Travolta Tire right now - a small one, and all but camouflaged by the expensive tailoring - but who's worried? He's professional enough to shed pounds when required, and bon vivant enough not to care about piling them on again in the down-time between pictures (though even in the *Saturday Night Fever* days, he never ballooned to Brandoesque proportions). He does not drink and, though a furious smoker on screen - one of the few actors, in fact, to practise this near-obsolete art with real panache - did not light up once on the several occasions I saw him (he sometimes permits himself a cigar, which, he says, reminds him of his father). These minor weaknesses put us in mind of an adored little brother with a passion for chocolate pudding. They're permissible - more than that, endearing. In a word, acceptable.

'Get Shorty' opens next Friday.
'Broken Arrow' opens on 12 April

COVER PICTURES
(clockwise from top right)
The Travolta look down the ages:

The monosyllabic New York disco kid in *Saturday Night Fever* (1977)

The man who knew how to dance and chew gum in *Grease* (1978)

The innocent hick learning the ways of the world (and how to ride a mechanical bucking bull) in *Houston in Urban Cowboy* (1980) - Ronald Grant Archive

The film that brought him back to life, *Pulp Fiction* (1994), in which he was a hitman with eyes of steel but a heart of gold, give or take a few carats

Today, in *Get Shorty* (1996) Travolta is a small-time loan shark trying to make it big in Hollywood - and succeeding...

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- Cinegrafix Gallery, 4 Copper Row, Tower Bridge Piazza, London SE1 2LH. Mon-Sat, 11am-7pm; Sun, noon-6pm.
- The Reel Poster Gallery, First Floor, 22 Great Marlborough Street, London W1V 1AF. Mon-Sat, 10.30am-6pm.

I'd like to do something else, but I don't know what. I don't resent those who can afford to paint. Good luck to them. I'd just like to get my act together.

Fax: 0171 293 2505

هكذا من الأصل

The Housegos went to India. They were sick. Their son was kidnapped. But they stayed and set up shop there

By Charlotte Packer

David Housego's first trip to India might easily have been his last when, as a student, his overland hitch to Bengal via Pakistan turned into a tour of the sub-continent's nursing homes thanks to a ferocious bout of dysentery. As unromantic as it was painful, the three-month odyssey was the start of Housego's life-long love affair with the country.

The decision to move permanently to India was made for him in 1988 when the *Financial Times* sent him to Delhi as their Asia correspondent. The Housegos imagined the transition would be simple enough. After stints in Paris and Iran, they thought they'd slip easily into ex-pat life. "I'd been over a few times," says Jenny, a textile historian. "And we'd spent two winters in India with the children, and I felt at home."

However, in keeping with the tradition laid down by David years earlier, all the Housegos fell sick within weeks of their arrival. "We were incredibly ill with Dengue fever. It laid us absolutely flat. I was trying to find my feet, and not speaking the language, and having help which wasn't always as helpful as it might have been was extremely frustrating."

David recounts a catalogue of horror stories which would have had most people heading for the first plane home. "You're just giving the bad side," complains Jenny, although she does admit there were times when she wondered what they were doing there.

However, those doubts had long gone when, two years ago, their youngest son, Kim, was kidnapped while on a family holiday, trekking in Kashmir. "We were very shaken by it all," says David. "But it didn't affect our feelings for India. Leaving never occurred to us." If anything, the experience seems to have confirmed their commitment to the country.

"It's home now. Where would we have gone?" says Jenny. "Living in India is rather like being on quicksand," she says. "You believe that one day the sand will become solid, but it never does; instead you find that you have learned to move with it."

Unlike the initial leap from London to Delhi, the switch from journalism to business came easily for David; he describes it as a fortuitous coming together of ideas and events. "We had been in India for about four years and various plans began to go through our minds. I felt that I might like to leave the *FT* and Jenny was interested in setting up a development project of some sort. We both liked the idea of working in India. A busy plan to use India's untapped traditional textile skills on upmarket products became a reality when the law regarding foreign ownership of Indian-based textile companies changed in their favour."

Shades of India was the result. Jenny had always thought it a pity that India's reputation for textiles was so bad. "It's thought of as cheap and cheerful," she says. "When actually the country has produced some of the very best textiles ever."

According to David, the current boom in the manufacture of western clothes in India is threatening tradi-



Photograph: Cherie Thomas

tional crafts. As he points out, you don't need embroidery skills to sew a pair of jeans together.

Although hoping to raise the profile of Indian craft, and preserve time-honoured techniques, the Housegos were determined to make the products as contemporary as possible. The design team, led by Jenny, include Stuart Robertson, an English painter based in India, and a French design consultant, Marie-Claude Berard. David's opinion is called in at the final stages of development.

"Whether it's paintings, the textiles we collect or something we are producing ourselves, David is brilliant at spotting what works. I get bogged down in all the art history. David has the eye and I have the knowledge."

It's a good combination. Although barely three years old, Shades of India's home textiles already grace the world's most exclusive department stores: Bergdorf Goodman and Takashimaya in New York; Portmault in Paris; and Liberty and Joseph Mainson and Conran in London. Their appliquéd and exquisitely embroidered bed-linen, tablecloths, curtains and mosquito nets are a sublime marriage of traditional Indian textile methods with contemporary designs and colours.

The latest collection in organdie,

a fine translucent muslin, very little used in the West, has had buyers from homewares departments worldwide falling over themselves to place orders. "Everyone is trying to copy them," says Sarah Bryant, Liberty's textile buyer. "The key to the Housego's success is that their staff take real pride in their embroidery. They are using India for its good workmanship, not as a source of cheap labour."

There's clearly a market for luxurious and beautifully made home textiles. Last summer Shades of India's organdie mosquito nets, £275 each, walked out of Liberty the minute they arrived. "We couldn't keep up with the demand," says Sarah.

The Housegos started with one workshop in a Rajasthani village, and a finishing shop, laundry and offices in the heart of Delhi. Running an international business from India's capital is not easy.

"Often in the summer, there's only water for an hour a day, and we need a constant supply for our washers," says David. Nightly water deliveries for seven months of the year and 13,000 gallon storage tanks on the roof keep production on track; regular power-cuts which cut off all communication with customers and their scattered workforce are kept at bay with a generator.

Compared to the office in Delhi, with all its back-up systems, the first village workshop was very basic: a rented bouse situated at the foot of a little range of hills with its own walled courtyard. Jenny describes it as "absolute heaven".

When Jenny opened the courtyard gates on the first morning, 20 women were waiting. "I'd estimated that we had work for about five ladies, but we gave them cloth and set them down." The next day 40 women stood at the gates, and on the third there were 60. They short-listed 20 on merit and it has grown from there.

A training programme runs in tandem with the workshop ensuring that when women marry and move away, other local girls are able to join. "Not that they need much training," says Jenny. "Their stitching is so good. It's in their blood. When the work involves new techniques, they learn fast and the quality is always superb."

David suspects that the workshop allows many of the women to escape from mothers-in-law and husbands. "It's been a tremendous boost to the income of the village, and it's given the women more independence within their households. Everyone is delighted." So much so that a deputation arrived from a neigh-

bouring village asking for a similar workshop.

The Housegos now have several workshops scattered across India. In Gujarat, the women produce incredible chain-stitch designs; and in Assam, the remote north eastern province, wool shawls are embroidered with scattered leaves in the area's trademark Kantha stitch. "Where possible, we use local methods from the areas the women come from," explains Jenny.

"If we gave this work to women in another area, the needlework would become thick and lumpy and they probably wouldn't have the same instinct for the way the design flows."

So what happens next? The Housegos aren't sure. "India is so huge and there are so many different techniques," says Jenny. She will spend the next year tracking down skills and techniques unknown in the West. In the meantime, you can see the Housegos' latest range of organdie at Liberty in London.

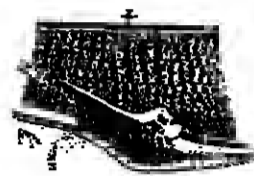
Other stockists:
Conran Shop, London (0171-589 7401)
Joseph Mainson, London (0171-245 9493)
Jenners, Edinburgh (0131-225 2442)

Six of the best Mock crocs

1 Osprey bag. £225. Shiny leather patent Kelly bag in mock croc. Optional shoulder strap and gilt fastening. A good, robust, elegant bag. A winner for being durable and stylish, also available in plain leather in the new acid brights. Available from Osprey, 11 Saint Christophers Place, W1 and Liberty, Regent Street, London W1. Enquiries (0171-935 3834)



2 Ravel shoes and bag. £49.99. Kitten-heel sling back shoe in patent mock croc. This is a very influential shape for spring and summer, thanks to Prada on this season's catwalk. Co-ordinate with a matching clutch bag at £24.99. Available at branches nationwide. Enquiries (0171-631 0224)



3 Pied à Terre Basics. £69. Simple slip-ons that look great teamed with trousers cropped at the ankle or a simple dress. The toe is gently squared, a look that will replace the ballet pump, which was so popular around Christmas. Simple and classic. Also available in brown. Available from branches nationwide. Enquiries (0171-491 3857)



4 Russell & Bromley shoes. £99.50. Leather mock croc "Gucci"-style loafer. A very popular, sensible look, currently available from a range of high street stores. Can look smart with a trouser suit or casual with jeans. The Russell & Bromley shoe is a stylish shape that supports the foot well. Available from branches nationwide (0171-629 6903)



5 Sally Gissing belt £65. Black patent leather mock croc belt. A very simple look, with a neat silver clasp will add style to any outfit. A good width for belt loops and very high quality. This item will still look good year after year. Available from Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London, SW1



6 Luc Bersen shoes. £110. These shoes are great for the transition between winter and spring with the majority of the foot covered, but with strappy backs. Again, these shoes have a slightly square toe, which will be more popular by the time summer arrives. A sensible height block provides inches without straining the foot. Available from Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London SW1



Stylist: Charlie Harrington
Photographer: Andrew Lamb



bazaar

Checkout

Where can you buy a zip? A simple enough request, which is surprisingly difficult to answer. Haberdashers really are a dying breed; we dig out some of the remaining few.

John Lewis, Oxford St, London W1 (0171 629 7711)
John Lewis became London's mecca for sewing paraphernalia when other stores decided to do away with their haberdashery departments.

MacCulloch & Wallis Ltd, 25 Dering St, London W1 (0171 629 0311)
This old-fashioned shop dispenses haberdashery items to trade as well as the general public. You can buy anything from cotton to corset-boning.

The Button Queen, 19 Marylebone Lane, London W1 (0171 935 1505)
With over 300 varieties of pearl button alone, prices range from a few pence to hundreds of pounds.

Send fabric swatches in with details of quantity, size and style and they will be happy to put together three or four samples.

Buttons for Buttons, 32 Coppergate, York (01904 632042); also at Ilkley, Harrogate and Keighley.
This very useful small chain sells everything from zips, ribbons, lace, braids and trims to cotton. And, of course, buttons from 6p-£13.

Buttons'n'Bows, Knight's Court, 70 Canseway Head, Penzance, Cornwall.
They stock fabric and metal clasps to make nurse's belts, through to suspenders, needles, pins, tape, patchwork pieces, cotton and buttons.

The Button Box 211 Shield's Road, Byker, Newcastle (0191 2760785)
This relatively new shop stocks all haberdashery requirements from lace to wool braids, fringes, ribbons and buttons.

Good thing

Waggers Dri-Bags, £11.95 - £27.95

If you find that your car always suffers when you and your four-legged friend have been for a turn in the park, then zipping the soggy beast into a towelling bag may well hold great appeal for you. The bag not only dries the dog off but, thus restrained, it prevents it from roaming around on the back seat leaving muddy trails and hairs everywhere. And as if that isn't enough, the nasty pong of wet dog is kept at bay. Of course, your dog may object to being stuffed into a towelling bag, preferring a muddy struggle instead, in which case you may come off worse than the back seats of your car ever did.

Comfey Pet & People Products, 2-4 Parsonage Street, Bradninch, Nr Exeter, Devon EX5 4NW (01392 881 285)

Mad thing

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shopping

Welcome to the pleasure drone

Gina Cowen meets James Hamill, an actor who runs a shop dedicated to the work of a most industrious insect

Shirley and Simon Codrington have two green Bakelite Beehive Knitting Wool Holders left for sale. Both in good condition. Interested? As a member of the UKHCS (United Kingdom Honey Collectors Society) you would be. Established last year, this quirky periodical produced by James Hamill invites avid apiarists and collectors to exchange honeypots and ideas. Swap a coffee mug with little beehives and bees all over it for a beehive china teapot, discover miniature pewter bears at a honey picnic, obtain advice on the restoration of honeypots, hunt for old coins struck with beehives or fifth-century beehive thimbles. Above all, cherish your collection of honeypots. They can range in value from around £5 to £10,000 for something silver and sublime from Mappin & Webb. Mr Hamill has a collection of more than 600 pots, as well as hives from all over the world: one in the shape of a windmill from the Netherlands, a Spanish cork hive - he is even reconstructing an octagonal hive from a drawing by Christopher Wren.

Aged 36, with classic good looks, he came over to England 18 years ago as a drama student with a bee in his bonnet. Although he takes on the odd role, they are fitted around his full-time job - passion would be more accurate - as beekeeper and manager of Hive, a little shop hidden away in the Battersea/Wandsworth hinterland. It is a honey paradise: an orderly clutter from floor to ceiling with honeys such as Cherry, Lime, Borage, Heather or Apple, freshly cut honeycombs and delectable concoctions that he and his wife prepare: white chocolate honey fudge, a wicked honey fudge sauce, honey mustards, and a special recipe tomato relish with honey. There are honey cosmetics, soaps, bath essentials, shampoos, conditioners, moisturisers and beeswax lip balms. He also stocks royal jelly, acknowledged for its life-promoting and restorative powers, and there are also tinctures and ointments of propolis, used as one of the most effective natural antibiotics known to man. It alleviates a vast spectrum of ills from stomach ulcers to acne.

The shop stocks gifts as well: Posh stationery, Buzz Bee wrapping papers, cards, candles (in beeswax) and honeypots galore. It is probably the only shop in the country dedicated solely to bees and



Busy bee: James Hamill at his London shop, where you can buy all things apian

Photograph: Jane Baker

their products. Behind the counter, the wall is covered with Hamill's awards from agricultural shows such as the Natural Honey Show and the Royal Show. However, the most striking thing is a glass-walled hive containing up to 30,000 live bees, which Hamill constructed himself.

A third-generation beekeeper from Orange County, California, Hamill developed his passion for bees from childhood, learning the husbandry of these tiny industrialists from his grandfather. Stage and screen interrupted an otherwise continuous passion, which reemerged 10 years ago when he and his wife put a couple of hives in their garden. About six years ago, he went to study beekeeping at Hadlow Agricultural College in Kent and three years later, he opened The Hive. He now has around 100 hives in orchards, fields, an

allotment in Tooting, the back garden, the shop. The neighbours don't mind? On the contrary, one of them wants to take up beekeeping.

Hamill is researching breeding (he breeds Queen bees for other beekeepers) and the various diseases that can affect bees, including the deadly parasite varroa. Fortunately, the honey is not affected. A Queen Elizabeth Scholarship has allowed him to visit four of the largest honey-producing countries in the world: America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. He has discovered that the international beekeeping community is one of great fellowship and hospitality. On a recent trip to Turkish Cyprus, he was changing his money at the bank and asked if there were any beekeepers in the town. The woman at the till overcame the language barrier

and rang up the local pharmacist who was a beekeeper. He promptly locked up his shop in the middle of the day to take Hamill on a tour of his beehives, followed by a celebration banquet with the whole family. Inspired by this fraternity, Hamill plans to trek with the wild honey-hunters in Nepal, crossing social barriers in a common search of sweetness.

Bees have a model of social structure that we should perhaps all be following: women in control. The Queen and her workers are exclusively female, the male drones having a short, rather sad role as impregnators, thereafter being generally ignored and left to die. All in pursuit of a sticky honey, the staple diet of the Owl and the Pussy Cat, the poetic food of Rupert Brooke's nostalgia ("Stands the Church clock at ten

to three? And is there honey still for tea?") and Jonathan Swift's moral musings: "We have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax; thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light". James Hamill has seen the light. He will also pass it on. From 19 March, he runs his next course in beekeeping. Four three-hour sessions held at the shop on Tuesday evenings, with a final session out on site, will cost £75. He covers the natural history of bees; beekeeping; hive activity, equipment and manipulation; harvesting and extracting the honey; and finally closing down the hives for the winter.

Contact James Hamill, The Hive, 63 Webb's Road, Battersea London SW11 6RX. Tel 0171-924 6233

The thing about...
Tabasco

When your food has no flavour, what do you add? Salt? Pepper? Worcester sauce? Anchovy essence? Mustard? Everybody has a favourite ingredient which gives their cooking that extra something. The two I swear by are sugar and that mid-century symbol of sophistication, Tabasco sauce. I've even dropped it into overland chocolate dishes.

The thing about Tabasco is not just that it injects fire into those foods that leave the tongue cold, but that it's an all-round style monster. That medicinal glass bottle with its spare, old-fashioned label, missing lid and name reminiscent of Caribbean limbo nights (it's actually made in Los Angeles) adds a decorative touch to shelves. It acts everywhere - hotel bars in Cumbria have it for that annual Bloody Mary, world trippers put it in backpacks, grannies sneak it into gravies, clobbers keep it to bring them back to their senses. It is the essential ingredient nobody discusses.

But it's always had one sales limitation in the northern hemisphere, and that's the wimp factor. While Africans, Chileans, Savanahians and even, bless 'em, Australians, happily scatter chillis about, we colder races go pink around the gills and say "gosh, when you said it was hot..." A bottle of Tabasco can last many years in the British kitchen.

But not for much longer. The company have launched a green sauce which, unlike Thai curries, is cooler than the red. Tabasco Jalapeno is comfortably familiar, coming in the same bottle with an almost identical label, but is mild and juicy enough to be licked from a fingertip. Comments, when it was tested on a group of trusting victims, ranged from "I thought you said it wasn't very hot" through "Dama, that's fine" to "Call that chilli sauce?" It will perk up your Welsh rarebit without offending your mother-in-law. Clear those shelves.

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Where Robert Harris meets Jeanette Winterson. Or not, as the case may be

I have gone down with an infection and I don't see why I should suffer alone. It isn't anything serious, just one of those acquired sensitivities to one of the many allergens of modern life. I contracted this one in my local bookshop, after browsing through the new titles section and noticing two paperback blurbs. One, for Tim Parks's novel *Mimi's Ghost*, read: "Taranino meets Peter Mayle" and the other, for Libby Purves's novel *Casting Off*, read: "Joanna Trollope meets Tom Sharpe". Whether it was just the coincidence of the same location appearing only a few shelves apart, or the transparent coat-trailing of the names selected, I haven't been able to shake this irritating turn of phrase from my mind.

In both these cases the quotations came from critics, not publishers but, inasmuch as the crit-

ics liked the books and were presumably recommending them to their readers, the difference is academic. This is criticism as the hard-sell, which can take place at any time from the moment the agent first turns up with a fresh manuscript for an editorial conference. "I think you'll find it marvellous," she says. "It's about a female composer in Nazi Germany whose muse actually turns up in person. They become lovers and transmit German secrets to the Allies, encoding them in an achingly beautiful piano sonata which Hitler orders broadcast as an example of the superiority of Aryan culture. It's sort of Robert Harris meets Jeanette Winterson." And, with any luck, when the book is published an obliging reviewer will scramble for the same cultural grid-reference (though you might have to settle

for "John Le Carré meets Iris Murdoch").

Grid reference may be a little too specific, actually. This is not a precise science, more a rough guide to where in the cultural neighbourhood this new arrival is likely to locate itself, just as you might say to someone who asks where you live that it's about halfway between Bromley and Sydenham. As we orienteer through the woodland of modern commercial culture, it's helpful to have some familiar landmarks to navigate by. Some directions are more useful than others, naturally; Joanna Trollope and Tom Sharpe might at least be found in the same county, might conceivably meet at a cocktail party or a British Council tour of Pakistan – so you can vaguely see what the person who wrote the blurb might be getting at – a rather English combination



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

of middle-class angst and sexual comedy (I guess). But in the Parks's example the way points are too widely spaced to be practical – as if you were to say to someone "turn left at Ambleside and stop before you reach Chicago". Here the promise is slightly different, of a simple money-machine alchemy; you can imagine the publisher's rep with his samples case open, trying to conjure the sound of jangling tills in the bookseller's mind. It doesn't matter that the conjunction is completely implausible; it's possible to spend a few idle

hours speculating about what such a combination would look like – presumably when you call out a local artisan to wipe brain fragments off the inside of your car he turns up three days late, completely pissed, and then swans off without finishing the quarter-lights. Or you pop out in the evening for a *petit rouge* and get into a shooting match with the local hatcher after he takes offence at your thesis that *Hoss from Bonanza* was obviously having sex with his horse. Even in the mind of the most fevered salesman, though, this isn't an accurate description of the book in question (a rather good black comedy with an Italian setting). It might even be counter-productive, a phrase that hopes to sell the book as hot-cakes but merely suggests that it is a mixed selection from the past-the-sell-by-date bin.

It doesn't help either that, as well as being a familiar commercial pitch, the location is also a fairly common piece of comic architecture, in which the possibility of unlikely marriage is exploited for laughs. The writer of "Taranino meets Peter Mayle" is clearly torn between providing a shorthand for the matter of the book, and tweaking the line into something a bit funnier than "combines witty violence with an accurate representation of provincial life". And "meets" is on hand to solve his problem, just as it is for anyone a bit short of inspiration on the day.

"Meets" is the most fashionable version of this habit of mind, one with a Hollywood briskness about it, but there are other more venerable forms – "a marriage of X and Y", say, or even "a cross between A and B". Clive Ander-

son offers a good example of the latter in comic mode – and of the fatal temptations of the construction. In the book accompanying his current BBC series he describes Che Guevara as "a cross between Tony Benn and Hugh Grant". This is sublimely off-the-half, conjuring pictures of a shy, flop-haired Englishman in stained battle-fatigues. He is clutching a mug of tea and staring down from the Corderilla at the enemy forces on the plain below. "Urm, I, um... look... oh fuck. I'm sorry but we can't blow the bridge unless we vote on composite 39 first. Umm... sorry." Presumably, if there's a bit of Tony Benn in Che Guevara then the reverse is true, too, though we will have to find another half: Charles Hawtrey meets Che Guevara? Che Guevara meets Mr Pooter? Enough – I feel a sneeze coming on.

The Lucy Gannon formula

From 'Peak Practice' to 'Soldier, Soldier', she's written some of the most popular drama on television. How, as they like to say on the box, does she do that?
By James Rampton



Lucy Gannon has a lot to answer for. Thanks to her, we have had to endure the sight and sound of Robson and Jerome. She is the woman responsible for *Soldier, Soldier* – the army drama that launched the tuneless twosome to the top of the charts and on to every teenage girl's wall in the land. Not content with that, Gannon also devised the hugely successful *Peak Practice* (doctors in beautiful surroundings) and *Bramwell* (doctors in beautiful costumes). To create one top-rated ITV drama is more than most writers could ever dream of managing; to create three just looks greedy. She has also developed a nice little sideline in single dramas such as *Tender Loving Care*, in which Dawn French played a murderous nurse. Gannon is now one of a very few writers whose name alone is sufficient to give the green light to any project to which it is attached. So how has she done it? Does she, like the makers of Coca-Cola, possess a secret formula?

Usually hard-nosed executives go all gooey at the very mention of the most sought-after writer of popular drama in British television, an unassuming, well-built woman with short-cropped black hair and a winning smile. (If you passed her on the street, you might think that she was a care worker – as indeed she once was.) All of them extol, first and foremost, her mastery of character. After all, you can have a drama without car chases or casualty units, without explicit sex or violence, but you can never ever have a drama without characters. "The few times I've had an idea rather than a character first, it's always gone dead on me," Gannon herself confirms, while sipping coffee in a quiet café off Marble Arch after a gruelling day filming *Trip Trap* – a one-off BBC drama about domestic violence. "When I started *Wicked Old Nellie* [a 1989 play about a woman in an old people's home], all I got was a mental picture of an old woman sitting in a room looking at her foot and thinking, 'Whose is that? It can't be mine.' Unless you get the characters first, you can't do it."

Jonathan Powell, head of drama at Carlton and the man responsible for scheduling *Soldier, Soldier*, *Peak Practice* and *Bramwell*, concurs. "She is a complete one-off. She dominates popular drama because she is brilliant at creating sympathetic characters that audiences like. In her scripts, there's an absolutely natural and instinctive directness. She's unfiltered, a very unpretentious person. She's not afraid of engaging the emotions of the characters or the audience." Think of the

beautifully modulated minuet of *UST* (Unresolved Sexual Tension) between headstrong doctors Jack Kerruish (Kevin Whately) and Beth Glover (Amanda Burton) that resonated through *Peak Practice*.

The producer Ruth Caleb has worked with Gannon since her first play for television, an adaptation of *Keeping Tom Nice* in 1989. "Lucy is a writer with a good understanding of what makes people tick," Caleb reflects. "She has a very good instinct for what people want to watch, and you can't learn that. Her writing is character-driven. She finds the plots only after she's found the characters. There's a richness to her writing because it's bedded in character." This enables Gannon to deal with "issues" such as feminism (*Bramwell*) or child abuse (*Testimony of a Child*) or teenage pregnancy (*A Small Dance*) without bashing viewers over the head with them.

"Her strengths lie in dealing with ordinary people in extraordinary situations," Caleb continues. "She is also able to deal with complexities simply. There are layers of complexity underneath a work that appears quite straightforward." Like *Thunderbirds*, all the work goes on behind the scenes. Gannon, a widow with one teenage daughter, is often at her desk from seven in the morning till 11 at night, buffing and polishing her scripts. George Faber, the BBC's head of single drama, calls her "a master craftsman, or should that be mistress craftswoman? She has a nose for a good story and constructs it with craft and skill."

Powell adds: "She's amazingly technically proficient. The first episode of *Bramwell* [in which the lead character, a crusading Victorian doctor played by Gemma Redgrave, and her patriarchal opponents, are cleverly introduced against the backdrop of a medical emergency] is a textbook example of how to set up a series. In years to come, when they're teaching television screenwriting at universities, they'll look at that first episode and see a sheer piece of construction."

The architecture of *Trip Trap* is equally impressive in the build-up to the first act of violence. Junior school head Ian Armstrong (Whately, imaginatively cast against type) is first seen sweetly reading bedtime stories to his adoring children in front of a roaring fire. Then, ever so subtly, hints about his vicious streak are dropped in, as he tetchily corrects his wife's (Stella Gonet) grammar, wipes her lipstick off with a threatening "That's better" and dismisses her best friend as a

"bloody woman". The sense of menace develops as he complains about having to keep a "tight hold" on her all the time before, some way into the film, he suddenly snaps into ugly, rib-breaking punches when she gets a wine delivery wrong.

Unlike many writers who graduate straight from short trousers into major drama commissions, Gannon has a hinterland. After more than 20 years as a nurse, residential social worker and military policewoman – all of which came in very handy for her subsequent career – in 1987, at the age of 39, she entered the Richard Burton Award for playwrights in the hope of winning some money for a new car. Although she had only been to the theatre once before, she defeated 15,000 other entrants with her play, *Keeping Tom Nice*, to win £2,000 and a six-month spell as writer-in-residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Faber, who brought that play to television, sets great store by the fact that Gannon has a masters degree from the University of Life. "She's had a lived," he observes. "She has had a number of very demanding jobs that gave her tremendous life experience – all of which comes through in her writing. She has an astonishing insight into the human mind. It's always good to work with writers who have lived: they've got more stories to tell. Whatever their talents, younger writers don't have the same urgency to impart things."

Powell grabs the baton. "It's unusual to find someone who came to writing so late in life," he opines. "She's very, very different from other television people because she came in without an inherited agenda. She came in fully-formed as a person. It would be a bit like Alan Plater or Troy Kennedy Martin popping directly from the womb. She's not an Oxbridge type looking down on the audience. She understands them without condescending to them."

Gannon underlines the importance of her background. Her father was in the Army and she had a peripatetic upbringing, leaving school at 16. "Army life gives you a breadth as a writer that you don't get if you've spent your entire life in Fiddlington-by-the-Sea," she reckons.

Trip Trap is ostensibly a departure from the comfortable, tried-and-trusted recipe. But the prolific Gannon has had popular successes with one-off "issue dramas" before: *Keeping Tom Nice*, about a handicapped boy whose father commits suicide,

picked up the John Whiting Award in 1990, and *A Small Dance*, in which a teenage mother abandons her baby, won the 1991 Prix Europa. Faber, for one, sees no conflict between hard-hitting and popular drama. "There is no distinction," he asserts. "Most popular drama is hard-hitting these days – look at *Band of Gold* or *Cracker*. *Trip Trap* is popular in that it takes ordinary people and puts them in a situation that has touched millions of people."

Gannon's work has not been immune to criticism. One columnist called her "the Betty Boothroyd of Derbyshire". "He said I was strident and left-wing," Gannon recalls, "and was convinced I had this huge political agenda. Wish I did." And after *Wicked Old Nellie*, the writer was condemned by a critic as "a bloody left-wing social worker".

But what irks her most is that smugger critics have looked down their noses at the popularity of her shows. "There's this tendency to decry ITV and to decry the popular," she harrumphs. "That's crap. If you value the viewer, then how can you be sniffy about *Peak Practice* or *Soldier, Soldier*? The great mistake is to think that if 15 million watch a programme and the reviewer doesn't like it, then it must be because the 15 million are all stupid."

Even after more hits than Mike Tyson, Gannon feels an outsider in the cocky world of television. "I still find it daunting," she admits. Nevertheless, three different drama executives are pleading with her for series ideas, and she already has a series about an open prison and a 17th-century love story in development at the BBC. The Gannon production-line shows no sign of slowing down.

"As soon as you get one out, they ask, 'Got any more?'," she sighs. "Telly is a huge writer-gobbling-up machine. Writing for television satisfies the village need for anecdotes – 'How's Mrs Bloggs?' – that sort of thing. I don't resent it. It pays me well and I love it. Seven years ago I was living in a council house with no central heating. Now I've bought a converted barn in Derbyshire and I'm trying to move to London. Writing is emotionally draining, but what a privilege at the age of 39 to find your voice. When *Soldier, Soldier* started, my husband George used to look out of the window and say, 'There are people out on the street. Don't they know *Soldier, Soldier*'s on?'"



Writer, writer: Lucy Gannon's success is based on her ability to create believable characters in programmes such as (from top) her new show *Trip Trap*, *Soldier, Soldier* and *Peak Practice*. Main picture: John Lawrence



Testimony of a Child

New Production
March 11 at 5pm
March 16 at 4pm
Tickets from £10
London Coliseum
Box Office 0171 632 8300

'Trip Trap' is on BBC1 at 9pm tonight.
'Peak Practice' continues on ITV at 9pm on Tuesday. 'Soldier, Soldier' and 'Bramwell' return later in the year.

arts reviews

TELEVISION

Father Ted / Fruity Moments (C4)

Re-appraisal for an unholy success and pip-pip-hooray for fruit. By Jasper Rees

In this job, you're paid to trust your own judgement. You think a new sitcom is dire, you say so. It then wins lots of awards, you look at the cuttings as a second series approaches and note that only the *Mail on Sunday* agrees with you. Forgive me, Father Ted, for I have sinned. When I first saw your programme, my sense of humour malfunctioned. But like an old communist seeing the error of his ways, I now freely admit that the show is side-splittingly hilarious, that you are the most profound and many-sided comic creation since Falstaff, and that we have to go back to Luther to find a comparably detailed commentary on the venial frailties of the priesthood. That sight gag involving two frocked men and a naked male posterior was a particular triumph – so killing. In fact, that you can grant yourself absolution for using it twice. Dingo the one, or rather two, about the priest on four wheels flying over a cliff. As for the joke involving the village idiot taking charge of a lorryload of sewage, who'd have thought that in the final frame, your self and Father Dougal would be splattered in the stuff? A prophet couldn't have foretold it.

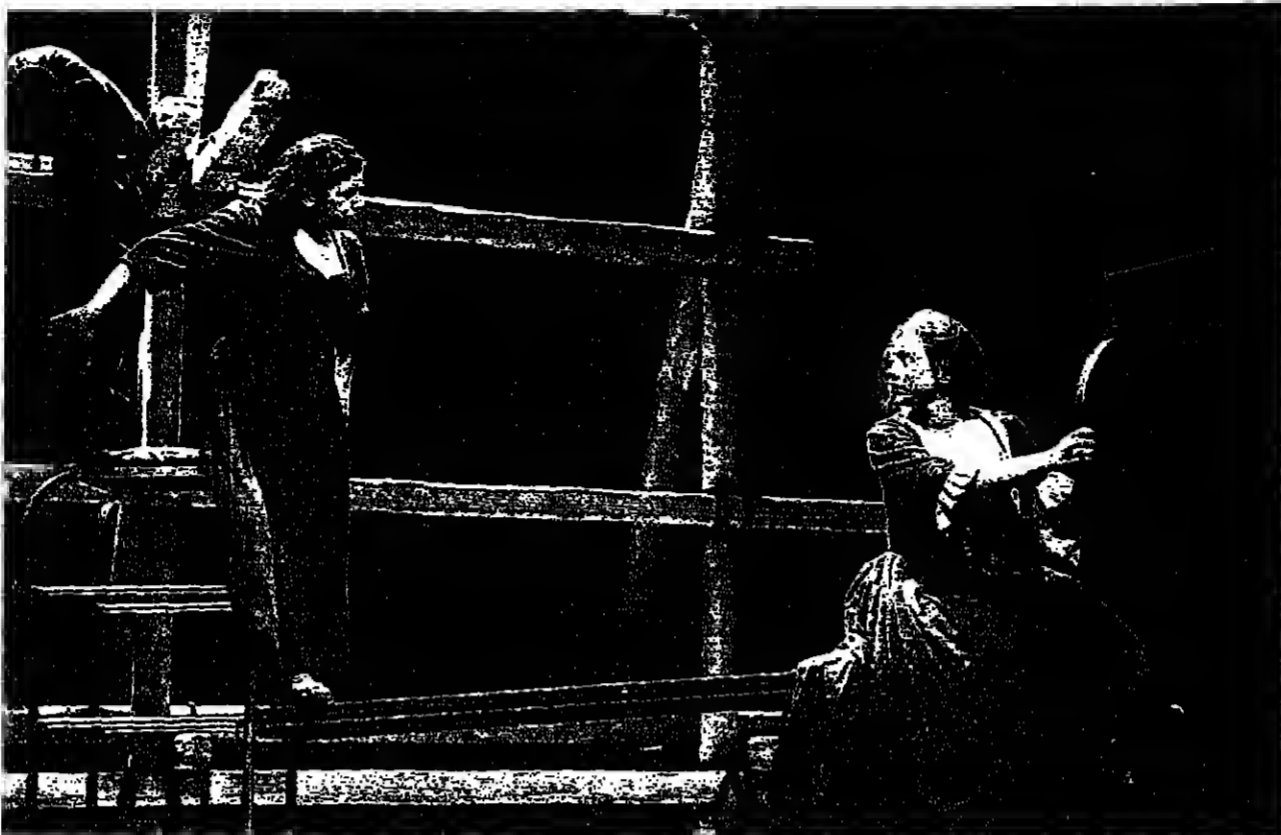
Because the pratfalls are executed with such cheerful vigour, it takes a while – in your critic's case, a whole series – to unearth the more knowing and world-weary gobbers of wit that fills the gaps in between. Far from appealing exclusively to the lowest comic needs (caravans falling over, old Father Jack too pissed to speak, etc), scriptwriters Arthur Mathews and Graham Lineham even run to literary criticism. Last night saw perhaps the first mention of Roddy Doyle in a sitcom. There can be no more reliable measure of a novelist's cultural outreach. The only other Booker winner it will have happened to is Salman Rushdie. "Ever heard the one about Kazuo Ishiguro?" doesn't really trip off the tongue.

Three unqualified cheers for *Fruity Moments*, a new series about the eponymous virtual. The narrator turning a watery text into wine was David Lloyd, once an England opening bat but these days the earliest broadcaster around. The coupling sounds happy (what next? Classy Ray Stubbs presents *Antiques Roadshow*?) but makes perfect sense. Now apples, as well as wickets, tumble to the same intoxicating sound, a fruit-punch accent from the rural pocket of east Lancashire that blends flat northern vowels and a ripe vowel burr.

Much of the programme's advice seemed a bit remote in March. The most useful suggestion you get going on your greenhouse strawberries *presissimo*. The man from the Royal Horticultural Society recommended planting early-fruiting varieties. He named two, "both American, by the way, but very good". The flavoursome subtext, still deeply embedded but doubtless due to sprout and flower in coming episodes, is that anyone who grows a lot of fruit tends to deserve the suffix "cake", which is presumably why they bought in a cricket commentator to tell us all about it.

THEATRE *Foe*, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds

Silence is powerful, especially on the stage, as Theatre de Complicite's reworking of the Robinson Crusoe tale points up. By Paul Taylor



The voice of Robinson Crusoe: Kathryn Hunter (left) with Selma Aispahic, who plays her daughter

Photograph: Stuart Morris

As shown by the mute and mutilated form of Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, silence tends to be more eloquent on the stage than on the page. The palpable presence of stage silence – its capacity to transmit a sense of enigma, threat – is of great advantage to Theatre de Complicite in their new adaptation of JM Coetzee's novel *Foe*. The book is the kind of scrupulous, searching counter-fiction to *Robinson Crusoe* that you might expect from a liberal white South African. In his version of the myth, Friday is not the chatty noble savage of Defoe's imagining, but a slave whose tongue has been severed (possibly by Crusoe) and a central brooding question mark, here embodied in a powerful, dignified performance from Patrice Naiambana.

With studied avoidance of sentimentality, Coetzee inserts a woman into the story of the island; indeed, he writes the novel in her voice. Once back in England with the traumatised Friday in tow, Kathryn Hunter's searingly expressive Susan Barton tries to sell that tale in order to secure the money that will liberate them both. In her communications by letter with her ghost writer, Foe, she becomes Coetzee's means of exploring such topics as the moral ownership and distortion of stories. Rob Pickavance's bewigged Foe is more interested in Susan's adventures before the island, searching for her daughter. Her willed silence on these matters is contrasted with the involuntary silence of the mutilated Friday.

Complicite have never been afraid of trying to make theatrical poetry out of improbably stageable prose, and with Bruno Schütz and John Berger they succeeded. Here, though – despite

an intelligent adaptation by Mark Wheatley and a grimly committed production by Annie Castledine and Marcello Magni – the material is so preoccupied with questions of textuality and so top heavy with text that it puts frustrating restraints on the exuberant physical imagination for which the company is famous. The show is successful at conveying the tricky tensions between the trio on the island (a barren, gully-scored block of baked earth washed by aural waves that rush towards you on the soundtrack with the painful exhilaration of an express train), but it does not solve the problem of presenting in clear stage pictures the symbolic relationship of the participants in the London scenes.

At the start of that second half, manuscript pages flutter from the sky and Foe's desk and chair, each with gigantic legs, dominate the view. The book, which takes the form of a memoir and letters, keeps insisting on its writtenness and, indeed, eventually establishes writing as the way Friday may find relief.

But it's hard to bring a letter writer and her correspondent into dynamic interaction and Foe's shifting dramatic status is not given a sharp enough focus. I'm ashamed to say that the bits I liked best were the ones of pure sensuous immediacy, for example, the moment, simple to achieve perhaps but magical, when Susan, demented by the noise of the wind, dips her head into a pool of water and all the sound suddenly switches off, creating, in a work preoccupied by silence, silence of dizzying intensity.

To 30 March. Booking: 0113-244 2111

POP

Tarnation, Dingwall's, London

Charlotte O'Sullivan falls for melancholia from the valley of the shadow of death

At 13, Tarnation's Paula Frazer was chucked out of school for smoking dope. As a result her father was fired from his job and the family had to leave town... It shows. Tarnation's music is no happiness fest. Try imagining Patsy Cline yodelling through the valley of the shadow of death. And then imagine something twice as lonely.

Tarnation, who played to a small but intense crowd at Dingwall's on Thursday night, are an unholy product of cowgirl punk and warped muzak. One bar will remind you of Lone Justice, the next of Chris Isaak. Whatever, it's not New Country and it's not tongue-in-cheek New Wave. It feels as old and earnest as the hills.

Tonight Paula Frazer, born and raised in the Deep South, wears a black velvet dress with a huge choker: in a good light she could pass for Elkie Brooks (at other times, it's undoubtedly Agnes Moorhead). She has a new band and they're mighty impressive. Her two guitarists take root on either side, plucking their strings with the concentrations of village idiots. Behind the trio, the drummer essays soothing brush strokes.

The melancholy anthems "The Well" and "Game of Broken Hearts" emerge slower than on last year's glorious *Genie Creatures* album, increasing the dangerous desire to swoon. But with Frazer there's no ground to catch you, nowhere to fall except down, down, down. It goes so deep it makes your groin itch. Incredibly, Frazer seems oblivious to her power: she sways with the blank-eyed intensity of a Cassandra and then fumbles between songs like a wacky grandmother. "Hey, the lights are so bright, here, it's like a UFO. It's OK, I'm not tripping..."

Highlight of the evening is "Halfway to Madness", with Frazer wailing, "In the muddy brown water where I wrote your name..." It all makes as much sense as the words of someone thrashing in their sleep. "How simple things seemed, when I just wanted to hold you" – ah, now we know what she's talking about. Her pure voice soars and the guitars build, putting you in mind of trains leaving town, cabooses rattling furiously along the tracks. That's Tarnation's music for you: providing a soundtrack for all the cheesy, hurtful images your dreams have ever thrown up.

When the mesmerised audience realise Tarnation have left the stage they start to whoop and holler. Frazer and the boys return. "Hello again, we'll do 'Big O Motel'", she says and the crowd cheers. "You really want some torture, don't you?" cackles Frazer, "seven minutes of torture." We're talking lost love here and "cologne-drenched curtains" – pure high-school poetry – but in the mouth of this careworn woman it works. Yeah, we're wallowing in pain and lordy, it feels good.

CLASSICAL Danish Composers' Biennale. The Nineties may offer thin pickings but the Sixties are in safe hands – and they're Welsh. By Stephen Johnson

Denmark's Third Composers' Biennale set off on its two-week journey last Saturday. There were no fanfares, no conspicuous attempts to market the product, but the theatre at Copenhagen's Den Anden Opera ("The Other Opera") was packed, and the discussion during the intervals and after the concerts seemed – from my short investigative dips – lively enough.

Refreshingly, there was little evidence of the so-called "ghetto mentality": no protests (how ever muted) on behalf of "isms" or factions; no obvious little cliques darting hostile glances around the theatre bar. Either the Danish new-music scene is a lot less bitchy and

insecure than its London counterpart, or the Danes are just better at swallowing their resentments. I have my suspicions, but for the moment I'll forbear to judge.

The quality of music in last Saturday's two concerts varied, naturally, but there was little that seemed less than accomplished, and from time to time – and particularly during the evening programme – a real, three-dimensional musical intelligence took centre-stage. Hans Abrahamsen's *Winternacht* was poetic in detail and overall conception. *Winternacht*'s brand of gentle Northern Impressionism was echoed in Olav Berg's *Four Poems* and in parts of Rolf

Wallin's *Boyl* (the name may have to be changed for British consumption). But the Berg had only just enough substance for one poem, let alone four, while the Wallin depended too heavily on stock soft-modernist devices, and the expected boy-lup never really happened. The players can't be blamed: the Norwegian BIT 20 Ensemble sounded like a first-class new-music band. They made a more convincing job of Magnus Lindberg's *Corrente* than any other group I've heard – so, those textures don't have to sound self-defeatingly dense after all.

The home-produced Athelas Ensemble's afternoon concert turned up

some unexceptionably pretty things, notably Svend Hvidtfeldt Nielsen's aptly named *Flowerfall*, and one entertaining relic of Sixties absurdism, Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen's *Je ne me tairai jamais, Jamais*.

But another Sixties survivor, Per Norgard's mini song-cycle *Prisme*, turned out to be a hard act to proceed. In its way, *Prisme* is just as much a child of the Sixties as *Je ne me tairai*, and yet so much of it feels discovered, not borrowed or imitated. In one delicious moment a sharp, dry chord cut off to reveal a comically whirling electric guitar – others have tried things like it, so why was this unmistakably Norgard?

By an elegant piece of planning, the previous evening's Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra concert included two works by veteran Danes: the 86-year-old Vagn Holmboe's new 13th Symphony and the oratorio *Moses*, written just over 30 years ago (the same year as Norgard's *Prisme*) by Herman Koppel. Holmboe's senior by one year.

Holmboe's new symphony may fall short of his best (eg Nos 8 and 10) in imagination and sustained argument, but the vitality was real enough. Composers in their eighties, if they write symphonies at all, don't normally conceive them in three muscular, fast movements.

Koppel's *Moses* was a find, clearly indebted to Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, but with a hieratic grittiness of its own. Of all the pieces performed during the weekend, this and the Norgard are the ones I'd most like to hear again. The Welsh conductor Owain Arwel Hughes (whose BIS recording of Holmboe's Eighth and Ninth Symphonies with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra I chose as one of my five discs of 1995) directed it all impressively, and was warmly applauded by the audience for his efforts. With or without the daffodil buttonhole, he looks as though he's well on his way to becoming an honorary Dane.



THE WEEK IN
REVIEW

David
Benedict

KEY



EXCELLENT



GOOD



OK



POOR



DREAD

overview

Michael Hoffman turns Rose Tremain's Booker-shortlisted novel of a physician in the court of Charles II into a film starring Robert Downey Jr, Meg Ryan, wigs, plumes and beauty spots.

critical view

Sheila Johnston was slightly disappointed: "While by no means a disaster, the story has a baggy, patched-together feel." "Rattles along at a good pace and doesn't overstay its welcome," smiled the *Guardian*. "Engaging," agreed *Time Out*. "Agreeably decorative and utterly flimsy," sniffed the *FT*. "You begin the film gaping in awe. Then the story grows dumb..." shrugged the *Times*.

on view

At the Odeon West End (0171-930 7615) and across the country from 15 March.

our view

Stunning Oscar-nominated visuals which look considerably more expensive than the \$15m budget.



THE FILM

RESTORATION

THE MUSICAL

TOMMY

Dating from the era when rock took itself terrifyingly seriously, the Who's rock opera resurfaces as a special-effects extravaganza directed by Dee McNuff to tumultuous success on Broadway.

Ryan Gilbey applauded "invigorating entertainment without the underflow of bombast." "Disappointingly wetness..." McNuff's production has the drive, skill and busting inventiveness to disguise every weakness," observed the *Times*. "Definitive," cheered the *FT*. "One of the greatest and most disturbing collections of songs in the history of rock," spluttered the *Telegraph*.

The high-tech staging and Chris Parry's lighting dwarf everything else. Like watching a dazzling but portentous pop video on stage.



THE ANNOUNCEMENT

TREVOR NUNN GOES NATIONAL

Former RSC artistic director Trevor Nunn (1931) will succeed Richard Eyre as the director of the National Theatre despite the press championing of young Denis Stephen Daldry and Sam Mendes.

"Nunn but the best," quipped John MacKie. "He does have his advantages. For one thing, there's experience," commented the *Guardian*. "I still wish the job had gone to the brilliant young Sam Mendes. The theatre needs a bit of excitement and all," wailed the *Telegraph*. "Mr Nunn is the best choice both to succeed Eyre and to succeed for the National," averred the *Times*.

Nunn now begins 18 months of preparation and planning before formally taking up the post in October 1997.

Nunn has little new writing experience but he's a great text man – and neither Daldry and Mendes seriously wanted the job.



THE NOVEL

MERCURY FALLING

Michael Ondaatje's *The Englishman's Boy* is a novel about a young boy who is taken to England by a German soldier during the Second World War. The boy is named John and he is taken to a family in England. The novel is a story of love, loss, and the search for identity.

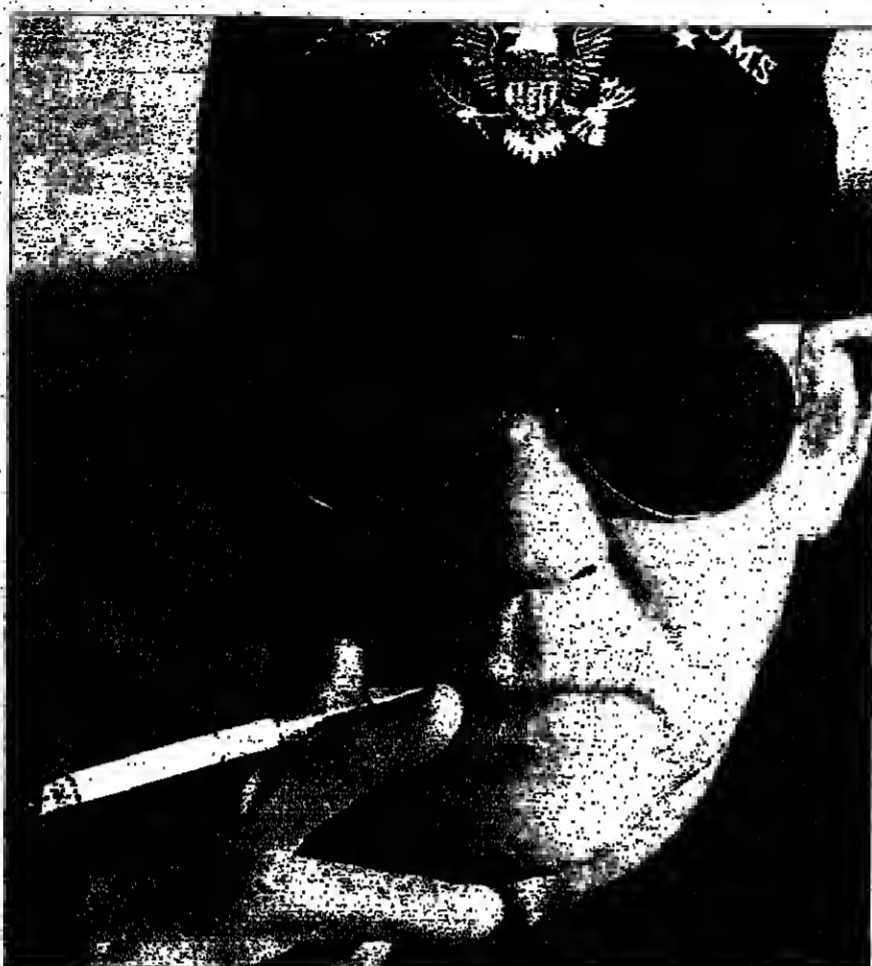
"A beautiful, haunting story," wrote the *Guardian*. "Ondaatje's prose is a masterpiece of understatement and subtlety." "A novel of great beauty and power," wrote the *Times*. "A story that will stay with you for a long time." "A novel that is a masterpiece of understatement and subtlety," wrote the *FT*. "A story that is a masterpiece of understatement and subtlety," wrote the *Telegraph*.

The novel is a story of love, loss, and the search for identity. It is a story that will stay with you for a long time. It is a story that is a masterpiece of understatement and subtlety.

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Literary lifers: the good, the bad and the nosey

Are literary biographers driven by envy? Tonight's Bookmark suggests life-writing is fuelled by corrupt impulses. Peter Parker disagrees



The usual suspects: Hunter Thompson (top) and Edmund White have three biographers on their tail. Sylvia Plath (here with Ted Hughes, above) fell controversially to Al Alvarez's pen in 1971

During *Lifers*, Roy Ackerman's BBC2 *Bookmark* film, subtitled "The Rise and Rise of the Literary Biographer", there is a shot of a man pounding along a road. "Before I begin work," Peter Whitmer confides, "the very first thing I put on my Reeboks. I go out my back door, and while I'm climbing the mountain I think about my characters I'm writing about as a biographer. I come back, sit down with a cup of black coffee and a slice of bread and go to it."

I cannot say that this is how I face the day "as a biographer," and I'd be surprised if it was a regime many of my colleagues would recognise. But then Whitmer lives in America, where it is fondly believed that beating the competition is merely a matter of proper training.

Whitmer was one of three people racing to write biographies of the cult journalist Hunter S. Thompson in 1993. Despite his Reeboks, however, he was outmanoeuvred by the tough and wily E. Jean Carroll, who simply moved in with Thompson, notebook at the ready. Whitmer and the third biographer, Paul Perry, prove ungallant in defeat. "The difference between E. Jean and me is that I did most of my interviewing standing up," says Perry. "It was a very good autobiography of E. Jean Carroll," says Whitmer. "If anyone's interested in that."

These three writers clearly make good copy, but they are unusual representatives of "the literary biographer". Whitmer, now a psychologist, was formerly "drummer for the hipie surfing pop group, The Turtles". Perry "has made millions writing airport books about near-death experiences"; and Carroll is "an *Esquire* columnist and chat-show host". Rather different track records from those of, say, Ian Hamilton, Richard Holmes and Anne Stevenson, who also appear in the programme.

Lifers is an instantly recognisable *Bookmark* product: the usual faces, the usual stories, the usual staged telephone conversations, the usual jazz soundtrack. It is not that the programme is uninteresting, merely that

it is desperately formulaic. Furthermore, the standard policy of editing out those who interview participants means that people are allowed to pontificate unchallenged. Germaine Greer, a long-serving opponent of biography, now finds herself the subject of one, and is filmed bemoaning the fact in a vegetable patch. ("I've just wrenched that poor little bean out of the ground," she says with evident empathy.) When she complains that her biographer might upset her mother, no one asks whether poor old Mum was upset by Greer's own ruthless slice of family biography, *Daddy, We Hardly Knew You*; when she displays her extensive and well-ordered personal archive, no one asks who or what it is for; when she compares biography with methods of torture employed by the Koreans, no one says, "Come off it, Germaine!". Similarly, no one challenges Al Alvarez, a notably pompous denuncer of biography whose "study of suicide", *The Savage God*, opened with what some people regarded as an exploitative memoir of Sylvia Plath. (Admittedly, the programme would have been on difficult ground here, since it includes a startlingly tasteless dramatisation of Plath's last moments, ending with the detached knob from a gas cooker rolling in front of a pile of books about her.)

The same tired old theories are served up. People write biographies because their own lives are "totally uninteresting", says Edmund White. The author of a massive volume on Genet, he should know. And yet now White finds himself the subject of three biographies-in-progress, so presumably—even if he is no Lynton Strachey—his life must be of some interest to someone. Scowling from a sofa, Martin Amis declares that "Any biographer is likely to be some sort of *avant-garde*. It's second or third best to what you want to be"—i.e. someone like Martin Amis, presumably, not an aspiration I've ever encountered among biographers (or anyone else). For Amis, biography seems a poor substitute for cosying up to the great: "When you finish a book written by a

contemporary that you love, you want to ring the writer up, you want to have a drink with the writer."

What actually drives most literary biographers is not envy, feelings of inferiority, or thwarted creativity, but sheer curiosity—a fascination with other people's lives that's similar to the impulse that leads others to write and read fiction. Eponymously inquisitive myself, I am always astonished by the protestations of those who claim not to want to read about the lives of those they admire. Never mind whether or not the life sheds light on the work—I have never understood how it could not, while remaining equally convinced that the work should stand or fall in isolation from its creator; what interests us is human nature.

That said, one occasionally shares with Ian Hamilton a feeling that there is an "essential impropriety" about the biographer's trade. Even though my subjects (J. R. Ackerley and Christopher Isherwood) are safely dead, a number of their friends, relations and relics—not to mention a host of casual, though highly intimate acquaintances—are not, and somehow have to be incorporated in the story.

A more interesting aspect of biography than the rivalries and lawsuits rehearsed in *Lifers* would be methodology—by which I mean seduction, prevarication, bullying and deceit. I exaggerate, of course; though it may seem hard to believe, most literary biographers do have scruples. In order to discover information, however, it is sometimes necessary to set aside the codes by which you normally conduct your life. Although just about able to restrain myself from reading other people's letters and diaries when off duty, in libraries and archives I have occasionally and inadvertently been given up on happened upon papers not intended for my eyes. One writer told me of the time he was handed the personnel file of a former employee of the BBC. He foolishly took a lunch break before inspecting this booty. When he returned it had vanished—a cautionary tale I have carried with

me ever since. I once came across a misfiled cache of letters, which I hastily read before handing them over to their owner. "I don't think these are supposed to be here," I said, adopting the expression of the Most Honourable Boy in the School. "I assume you read those letters," he remarked casually a few days later. I hadn't fooled him for a minute.

I have also gone to interview people hoping to trick them into revealing things that I suspect but need to confirm. It doesn't always work. I couldn't get one very distinguished British acting knight to confirm that he had enjoyed a brief fling with Ackerley in the 1920s, though he freely admitted to one with Godfrey Winn (a rather more shaming confession, by any standards). Despite my probing, a key figure in Isherwood's life is currently holding out on me about a highly significant episode he unwisely confided to others, who immediately blabbed to me. Unwilling to betray my sources (both of whom, uneasily valiant for truth, spoke to me "off the record"), I must bide my time.

For most of us there remain limits to what we will do in order to acquire information. E. Jean Carroll insists that she did not "scrooge" Hunter Thompson, but implies that this was a question of health risks rather than biographical ethics. No one has ever thrust themselves at me in exchange for information, alas, but one biographer told me that not only he but also his partner were obliged to pop into bed with an elderly gentleman before he would talk. I subsequently read his Acknowledgements page ("...beyond the call of duty...") very carefully.

A genuinely revealing and lively programme could be made by following a single biographer in his or her quest, for the job has many of the elements of a thriller or a black comedy. But who would volunteer? As James Atlas, who has spent a decade stalking Saul Bellow, puts it: "I feel for him at times. It must be a fearful experience to be confronted by a biographer. I wouldn't want my biography written."

The greatest story never told

Karen Armstrong is unimpressed by a simplistic rendering of the Bible as fiction

Walter Wangerin has attempted to rewrite the Bible as a novel. "He has given the Bible back to the people," proclaims the endorsement on the cover of *The Book of God*. "The Good Book becomes the Good Read." Christians who have found the Bible perplexing and arcane, its message obscured by centuries of dusty commentary, can take heart. In prose reminiscent of that of Jeffrey Archer or Judith Krantz, Wangerin traces the biblical story from the destruction of Sodom to the foundation of the Christian Church.

Despite the growing fundamentalist trend that insists the biblical stories are literal state-

ments of historical fact, there is nothing new about perceiving the Bible as fiction. Scholars have demonstrated the immense literary skill employed by the writers and the complexity of the text, which makes a simplistic interpretation impossible. It is becoming increasingly difficult to treat the Bible as a holy encyclopaedia in which we can find accurate information about God; instead it forces us to confront the complications of the human condition.

Wangerin's novel, however, seems to go out of its way to drain the Bible of both depth and complexity. At the end of a century scarred by genocide and holo-

The Book of God
Walter Wangerin
Lion, £20

caust, for example, he finds nothing disturbing in Joshua's indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants of Canaan, nor does he seem troubled by God's extermination of almost the entire human race during the Flood. He prefers to take the text at face value than to ask difficult questions.

Not so the biblical-writers, who often hint at untold complica-

tions. They leave us with the distinct impression that Isaac was profoundly damaged by Abraham's readiness to offer him as a human sacrifice. Yet in Wangerin's novel, Isaac takes the projected sacrifice serenely in his stride.

In the Bible, our glimpses of the divine are often perplexing, fearful and ambiguous. We frequently have to wrestle with the text as Jacob wrestled with the angel and, like Jacob, experience only an elusive sense of blessing. But there is no such struggle in *The Book of God*. According to Wangerin, Purple prose offers a facile substitute for spirituality. Of Moses, for example, Wangerin plangently notes:

"When one caught him gazing upon the people in the evening, there appeared in his eyes a dreaming gentleness. A kindness. He makes no effort to square this with the fierce Lawgiver who, a few pages earlier, had ordered a ruthless massacre to punish the worshippers of the Golden Calf."

Jesus himself appears as a soap star, his clean-cut looks (much is made of the fact that he shaves regularly) revealing his nobility of soul. His appearance effects a "small commotion" in the breast of Mary Magdalene, when she sees that his "black hair reflected a deep red sheen" and that he was "radiant and ruddy, his teeth per-

fectly white." Unsurprisingly, her response is as banal as Jesus's good looks. "She blurted: 'Raisin cakes. Rabboni! A little lunch, sir, while you are sitting here?'"

This lush but trite lyricism recurs with greater frequency in the gospel portions of Wangerin's novel, probably reflecting his belief in the richness of the New Testament as opposed to the Old. Indeed, we leave the Hebrew Bible with a grim picture of the religion of Israel. We see the people of Jerusalem listening to Ezra's reading of the scriptures during a freezing rainstorm. Nehemiah looks up at the grey clouds and "thinks he hears thunder, a mut-

tering in heaven, and he takes this as a sign of divine approval." The implication is that Judaism has become a rigid, comfortless faith, its deity remote and ambiguous.

This apparent failure to recognize the integrity of the Jewish religious experience points to a basic flaw in Wangerin's project. Unlike his novel, the Bible does not represent a single viewpoint. It is a collection of texts, which present conflicting visions. It thus bears witness to the fact that no one human expression of the divine can ever suffice. If we forget this, our understanding of the Bible is likely to be as reductive and trivial as Wangerin's empty epic.

Packaging evil as splatter-pulp

Harmful neurotics, silly saints and nasty passages from the classics. There's got to be more to it than this, says Pete Davies

Readers expecting a gorefest will be disappointed. The packaging's all there—the doomy pomp of the title, the jacket with the disembodied mad eyes on a ground of blood-red, the praise for Masters' previous work on Jeffrey Dahmer and Dennis Nilsen—but don't be fooled. This is philosophy bere, this is a dig into the deep matter of why we do bad stuff. This is "an incisive, thoughtful, and provocative meditation..."

And I'm the King of Buganda. Sloppy, self-regarding, banal, this book is the intellectual equivalent of open-cast mining, foraging across a mountain of other people's ideas, it may unearth an incontestable conclusion, but it doesn't half trash the landscape along the way. It reaches its nadir with a perfunctory account of the Holocaust lifted wholesale from Martin Gilbert—but there is laziness throughout.

It won't do to warn against unthinking simplifications, and then to claim that pit-bull owners "are all, to a man, feeble brutes". You cannot describe Joan of Arc as "arguably a harmful neurotic", and yet say sixty pages later that "there was nothing of the hysteric about her". It's patently nonsense on any

The Evil that Men Do
by Brian Masters
Doubleday, £16.99

page to proclaim that "there are dozens of St Francis in all our lives". Other statements are simply risible. Audrey Hepburn bad "more spunk" than Jesus? Penelope Keith is in "the dominant five per cent of the human race"? As for the author's announcement that, "it is certainly true that men... sometimes slap their mates across the face" with their penises, I'm afraid at that point I had to drop the book helpless with laughter, afflicted with surreal visions of a pack of *Loaded* readers indulging in horseplay in the public bar.

Even properly construed, it's a peculiar image, but some of Brian Masters' other remarks are pretty peculiar too. His contention that we bear more about child abuse than its incidence warrants sits ill with his apparent downgrading of some of it to mere "silly sexual play"; his solution for the bysterical presumptions of St Theresa of



Cyclops: unquotably nasty

Lisieux, that "she ought to have been spanked", is at best carelessly brusque. More mundanely, his cod-behavioural description of a row in the kitchen ("the husband has disordered materials on the wife's territory") is woefully hackneyed—but if you can extrapolate from nature that "the appropriate behaviour of the female is to yield and submit", then the charge (to put this mildly) that you're not really up to speed on today's gender front cannot be far behind.

Masters' attitudes are an odd mishmash all round; he lurches



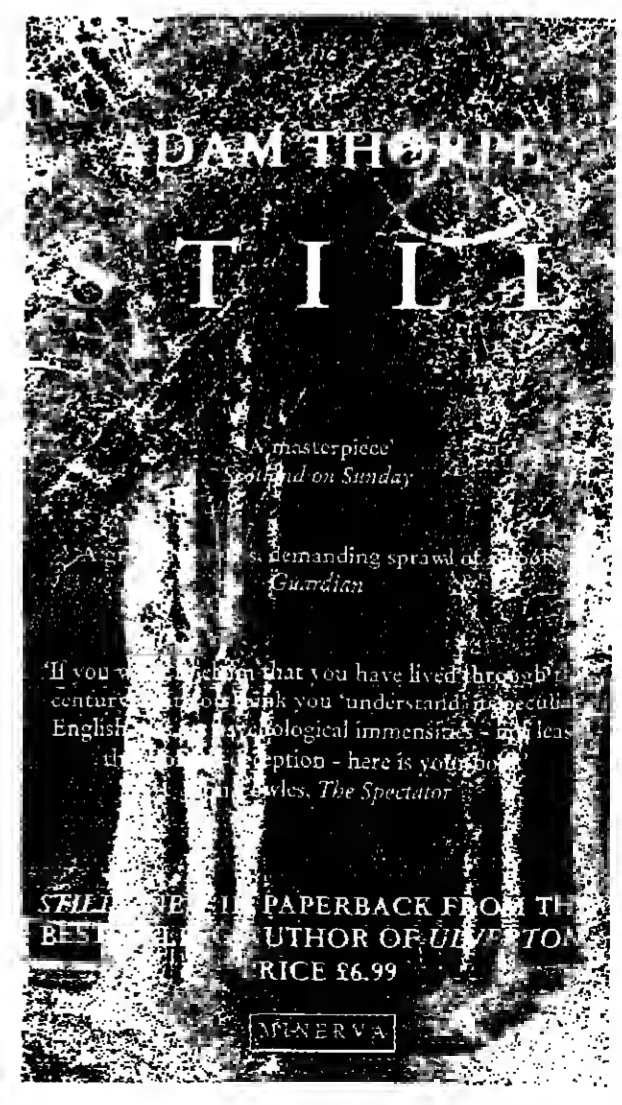
St Theresa: in need of spanking?

without blinking from the hearteningly liberal to the sweepingly obtuse. Righteously dismissive of the nastier shades of modern Conservatism, he argues passionately and persuasively that no moral system can be complete if it doesn't accord rights to animals as much as to people. Yet the next moment he's declaring that "Christianity is morally unwholesome" or making opaque remarks about the similarity between the gentlemen's clubs of London and communities of grey-lag geese.

This last has little more purpose

than to let us know he's a club member himself—and the fact that he went to the same school as Michael Caine (not to mention his fawning paragraph about Richard Branson) is similarly irrelevant to his supposed subjects, namely good and evil. As to them, he trawls through genetics, determinism, Darwin, Sartre, religion, madness and much more besides. In order to finally tell us that if we all thought a little more about what we did, the world would be a better place.

Not only incontestable, this conclusion is also bogglingly obvious—and it would bear more weight if Masters had done more thinking himself. This is a writer, however, who tells us that he finds the humming out of the Cyclops' eye in the *Odyssey* "unquotably nasty", yet who can still give us specific detail on the Wakefield man who tore his wife's face apart with his bare hands, or the Californian killer who ripped his victim's nipples off with a pair of pliers. When you can be inconsistent like that, all claims to high intent fall away: evil's just an itch, all Masters does is scratch it, and for all the results are worth. Doubleday might as well have given us the splatter-pulp package.



All you need to know
about the books you
meant to read



by Gavin
Griffiths

EUSTACE AND HILDA (1944-49)
by L.P. Hartley

Plot: Eustace and Hilda are brother and sister, mucking about at the seaside. Eustace finds a shrimp half-eaten by an anemone and, terminally over-sensitive, finds himself in a quandary: the problem is solved by Hilda who decisively wrenches the shrimp from its predator: as a result, both creatures perish. This incident is the emblematic leitmotif of the novel. Eustace is taken up by a fairy godmother figure, Miss Fothergill, who leaves him pots of money when she dies. He decides to share this with his sister, so that both "shrimp" and "anemone" can survive. The only hit is Eustace's heart condition. He goes to Oxford. Slightly unhinged, Hilda opens a clinic and is betrayed by a posturing, neo-fascist friend of Eustace, has a breakdown and withers in a wheelchair. Eustace comes to the rescue: but in bringing the anemone back to life, the shrimp must die...

Theme: Eustace and Hilda are locked in a stately pavane of mutual destruction that they neither can nor wish to halt. Eustace evolves into a symbol of the refined aesthetic spirit, while Hilda is the tenacious dog-gooder, a public-spirited pain in the neck.

Style: Insidiously graceful. Hartley shifts the narrative point of view and strands the reader in a state of wary apprehension.

Chief strengths: Apart from George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, no other novel offers such a devastating illumination of sibling rivalry.

Chief weakness: The half-eaten shrimp and the carnivorous anemone, a deeply off-putting symbol of the sexual act.

What they thought of it then: Hartley's chum, Lord David Cecil, speaks of the trilogy's "poignancy", "pathos", and "exquisite refinement for feeling". He omits to stress the irony and humour.

What we think of it now: Apart from *The Go-Between*, most of Hartley's work is out of favour. He falls between the social acuity of James and the sexual poetry of Lawrence.

A cindery path out of childhood

L.P. Hartley's life moved from unexplained family trauma to cantankerous old age. Paul Binding looks for clues



Directly autobiographical: Dominic Guard (left) as the letter-carrying Leo in Losse's film version of *The Go-Between* (1970); L.P. Hartley's father (above) with his three children, Leslie, Enid (seated) and Nora. Enid was the Hilda of Hartley's Eustace and Hilda.

A member of L.P. Hartley's family, afraid he would enlist, wrote in 1915: "England is going to need just such men as Leslie presently". Born in 1895, he had as a schoolboy quite unusually combined sensitivity with an ability to succeed in conventional domains. Good at both work and games, he became head boy of his public school, Harrow, from which he won an exhibition to Balliol, Oxford. And when, after a year at university, he did enlist, he acquitted himself well in the army, though he saw no active service. He returned to Oxford having been told: "You have done your utmost for king and country."

But when England became aware of Hartley, it was as a writer of novels fixated on the transition from childhood to the adult world, seen as the passage from light into darkness. His work insisted, in the most dramatic terms, that he had suffered an early trauma of such dimensions that participation in normal life was utterly impossible afterwards.

Emotional relationships and sexual relations he viewed and presented as being, of their nature, destructive. By his last years, Hartley's misanthropy was all-pervading. He regarded his country as having been corrupted by too much compassion. He used his literary gifts to articulate the most terrible ideas. The English working class he called the WC, changing this, in case his point had been missed, to "the toilet". He wanted wrongdoers "literally branded, with F for forger, V for violent criminal etc" and many people hanged. Humans weren't the only object of his hatred

either. Disturbed by swans while boating on the River Avon, Hartley killed two with barbiturates wrapped in bread pellets. He died in 1972 with years of heavy drinking, "servant problems" and paranoia behind him.

What brought about this change? What darkened this clever, imaginative, well-off, indeed successful, writer's journey through life? What is the truth behind the various forms that the blighting trauma take in Hartley's best-known novels – *The Eustace and Hilda* trilogy, *The Go-Between* and *The Brickfield* – forms that support as well as conflict with each other?

Adrian Wright, as he tells us, admired Hartley's novels so greatly that their author became a hero to him. Fascinated by the sadness behind the sensibility, he set out first to explore Hartley's life and then to write it, persevering where others had turned back defeated by the dead man's friends and relations. But Wright won over Hartley's surviving sister Nora who asked: "What sort of book do you want to write?" A truthful book about Leslie, Wright said.

In this he has both succeeded and not succeeded. Wright's feeling for the writings is unflinching, as is his careful attention to them. A late starter in full-length fiction, Hartley was very productive once under way, and in his lifetime received wide acclaim. Three publishers vied for his work because they thought him the most distinguished British novelist of the times.

He was a candidate for the Nobel Prize, and decidedly annoyed not to get it. Few post-war literary novels have had

Foreign Country:

The Life of L.P. Hartley

by Adrian Wright

André Deutsch, £17.99

a happier career than *The Go-Between* (1953) which the Pinter-scripted, Losey-directed film greatly boosted; it has with no strain survived the 24 years since Hartley's death.

Wright is good on what features his novels share and what makes each one an individual creation. He is particularly shrewd about the lesser-known works, *The Boat* (1949) for instance, Hartley's ungainly but absorbing novel of the English countryside in the Second World War, or *My Fellow Devils* (1951), a study of conventional virtue coping with the evil embodied in a film star.

The life as opposed to the work presents formidable problems, the worse for Hartley's continual implications that the latter sprang from cataclysmic happenings in the former. During the filming of *The Go-Between*, for instance, a remark of his about the "real-life" Leo would suggest the novel was directly autobiographical. And Wright is convinced, surely correctly, that *The Brickfield* (1964), where the adolescent hero has a more active initiation into sex, is more autobiographical still. But when all has been thought and said, what evidence is there for any traumas?

Wright builds up a convincing picture

of a family life of suffocating gentility, decorum and tedium: his father was a Peterborough solicitor, and a rich man through wise investment in a local brick field, while his mother and elder sister were both curiously narrow and interfering women. Aren't Hartley's lurid plots essentially dramatisations of wishes nurtured during those years which so squeezed all trace of rebellion and assertion out of him?

I am not even persuaded – for again so little evidence seems available – of Hartley's homosexuality. His obsessive dependence on women friends must have had an erotic element surely. We seem to be, in either respect, in very "cindery" territory here, to use one of his *alter ego* Leo's words.

It is on emotional matters that Wright is least satisfying. His determination, somehow to account for so much unhappiness leads to this book's vitriolic flaw. Wright believes that Hartley's friendship with his one-time fellow under-graduate, the younger Lord David Cecil, was so intense that he never recovered from Cecil's marriage, and that Cecil was therefore guilty of a betrayal that haunted his days.

In order to flesh this out he attempts to deny David Cecil – a friend of my own for 27 years – and his wife Rachel, herself devoted to Hartley, qualities which I feel his subject would have been the first to commend. There was constant communication between the two men throughout their lives. David Cecil taking the most thoughtful and generous interest in his friend's work.

Wright doesn't suppress this – he

gives us all the facts but hedges them about with prejudiced and misleading conjecture. He also fails to do justice to what the two men shared – a Neo-Platonist life-view, and literary admirations in which David Cecil was often the leader, such as those for Emily Brontë and the Jacobites which so influenced Hartley's writings. In fact this biography's very title, deriving from the opening sentence of *The Go-Between*, can itself be traced to David Cecil, who used the phrase with reference to the past in his inaugural lecture as Goldsmith's Professor in 1949. David and Rachel Cecil were sympathetically and practically concerned with Hartley in his sad last years, as Wright, who himself shows exemplary kindness in his treatment of them, relates. This makes the flaw the more regrettable.

But maybe there is another explanation for Hartley's depressions. Judged by the standards they appear to invoke, for all their formal accomplishment, his novels are ultimately unsatisfactory. *The Go-Between* amply deserves its success, with its many felicities of eye and ear, such as the schoolboys' slang and the marvellous set-piece of the cricket match and village feast, and its drama can jerk out a few tears. But it is middlebrow stuff; its psychology, morality and governing ideas cannot stand up to serious scrutiny.

For reasons we will probably never know, Hartley preferred retreat to confrontation – a chronic evasion which prevented any of the fictional metaphors for his agonised condition from ever reaching completion.

A smoked-fish treasure hunt

Hugo Barnacle celebrates publication of a rambling Russian masterpiece

Yury Dombrovsky died in Moscow in 1978, shortly after the first Russian edition of *The Faculty of Useless Knowledge* appeared in Paris. A former camp inmate who served two sentences in the Gulag for the usual reason (nothing, in particular), he was rehabilitated by Khrushchev and saw some of his work issued under official Soviet imprints, but he was obliged to publish this last novel, his masterpiece, abroad.

It details an episode in the Stalinist terror of 1937. A couple of men bring some fragments of an ancient gold diadem to the city museum of Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan. They say they found the stuff on a partridge-shooting expedition. Accepting a 300-ruble reward, they disappear smartish leaving false names. The local secret police then swoop and arrest Zybin, the museum's keeper of Antiquities, for theft of socialist property, sabotage, Trotskyite activity and so on.

According to the publishers' blurb, this happens because the diadem has disappeared along with the treasure-hunters. Some confusion here is understandable, since everyone talks about "the gold floating off" and Dombrovsky's narrative, driven by dialogue, is often oblique and disjointed in a comic style oddly reminiscent of Kingsley Amis, but in fact the diadem goes nowhere except into an NKVD evidence bag.

The "missing" gold at issue is the rest of the hoard, which the museum authorities have sup-

The Faculty of
Useless Knowledge
by Yury Dombrovsky
trans Alan Myers
Harvill, £15.99

posedly let slip by failing to grill the treasure-hunters properly. The NKVD claim there must have been 25 kilos at least, but they're making it up, probably on the basis of a regional quota for archaeological finds set out by some Moscow institute. In short, Zybin is charged with conspiracy to steal something which may never have existed.

They seem to pick on Zybin, who took no part in the transaction, because he was once questioned by the authorities when a student acquaintance committed suicide, and anyone who has ever been questioned is an anti-Soviet element by definition. (This was how Dombrovsky himself got into trouble.)

The NKVD captain, Neiman, Jewish and fearful for his job, wants to stage a big show trial, just like they have in Moscow, and Zybin can be made to fit the bill as an enemy agent. He was even arrested while making for the Chinese border.

This is a nice touch. We know that Zybin was really wandering up-river to buy some black-market home-smoked marinka fish, because the treasure-hunters offered some of this rare

commodity to one of the museum staff, which means the fisherman might be able to provide a lead, but if Zybin admits this to Neiman's investigators he will be admitting... conspiracy to steal socialist property, only fish instead of gold.

The bulk of the book deals with Zybin's resistance to weeks of interrogation. There is a wonderfully sinister *Alice in Wonderland* humour about the investigators' solemn attempts to build a case out of nothing, and the effect is in no way dented by Dombrovsky's insistence on portraying the secret police with a certain rich sympathy.

Being Russian, however, the story rambles quite widely. We are given chunks of a treatise one of the characters is writing on the betrayal and trial of Jesus, as in Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*. Zybin shares a cell with an old lag who memorably describes life in the Siberian camps. The old lag, a Georgian, has written to his boyhood friend, Stalin, to remind him of a small loan outstanding since 1904, and we are shown Stalin at his dacha wondering whether to sign a release form or a death warrant.

Other equally real but far less famous persons appear under their own names, among them Dombrovsky's future wife, Clara. Her presence, like that of the poplars rustling in the breeze outside the windows of the interrogation room, can be taken as a sign that the novel will not degenerate into mere black comedy. Rather, it is tragicomedy, a higher and wiser thing.

Out from Willie's shadow

Patricia Craig reads a worthy attempt at rehabilitation

The Yeats Sisters,
by Joan Hardwick,
Pandora, £8.99

Lily and Lolly sounds like a music-hall duo, but in fact the lives of WB Yeats's sisters, Susan and Elizabeth, weren't especially abundant in gaiety. They were the dogbodies of the Yeats family; indeed at one point, as their biographer is at pains to stress, it was only the income they supplied that kept things going.

The story of their father's improvidence is pretty well-known: how he abandoned the Bar for a career in portrait-painting, and shunted his family back and forth between Dublin and London, as each of these settings appeared more auspicious to him when he was out of it, while his wife (born Susan Pollexfen) withdrew increasingly into her own discontent. Of her four children, two – the boys – were destined to become famous, while the other two were merely hard-working and enterprising. Lily (as Susan was always called to distinguish her from her mother) first began earning money in 1888, as an embroiderer for May Morris, daughter of William. Lolly, the younger sister, wasn't far behind her, once she'd gained a French Teaching Certificate, and acquired the confidence to produce some painting textbooks. However, the two are remembered (if at all) – the most frequent descriptive term applied to them is "unsung" – for setting up the Cuala Press and allied industries in Dublin in 1908. The Press which produced many first editions of their brother William's work.

The Yeats Sisters shows the overbearing, disputatious side of WB. Joan Hardwick can't forgive him for failing to value these industri-

ous siblings more highly, though he thought well enough of Lily. Between himself and Lolly, indeed, there was constant friction: they were too alike, self-willed and difficult to form any kind of alliance. The superficially more docile Lily was his ally, while he lived at home; Jack Yeats – the youngest of the four – hardly shared in the others' precarious upbringing at all. At a time when money was particularly tight, Jack was packed off to his grandparents in Sligo; and then he married a fellow art student in London at the earliest possible moment. The Yeats girls never married at all, and indeed the entire sexual dimension in their lives is a blank, at least as far as this biography is concerned. The author hasn't come up with any more convincing suitors than an unforthcoming Trinity don (for Lolly), and the rich New York collector John Quinn (Lily) – though the latter was always on the lookout for mistresses as well as manuscripts and works of art, and didn't have to look too hard (Joan Hardwick speculates) to spot Lily Yeats's unsuitability for the role. Nevertheless, he remained a patron of the entire family until his death in 1924.

For all their talent and practicality, Lily and Lolly were never exactly New Women or even Girls of the Period, both these tags



Lily and Lolly: workaday women

implying up-to-date views and a measure of social assertiveness. Even their stand on any issue of the day can't be called enlightened, if you leave aside the question of women's employment – and that was a matter of necessity, not choice. Given the choice, we gather, they'd infinitely have preferred to be married. Their biographer can't avoid judging both of them, especially Lily, "conventional": church-going, anti-drink and shocked to the core by May Morris's carry-on with GB Shaw.

Although they settled permanently in Dublin in 1902, a time of considerable cultural and revolutionary activity, the sisters never took a firm, or a prescient, line on Irish affairs, and were at one in considering Constance Markievicz insane to wear men's clothes and involve herself in politics. And as for Maud Gonne – they'd taken against this muse of their brother's from the very first moment when

she came to call on WB at Blenheim Road in London in 1888, and looked down her nose at them, wearing a "sort of royal smile", intensely irritating. They fared no better with Lady Gregory, who took no notice of them whatever.

Joan Hardwick's aim is twofold: to bring the female Yeates from under the shadow of their brothers and father, and to stick up for Lolly, the more spirited, recalcitrant and denigrated of the two. Lily, the author tells us, must take some blame for the unadmirable view of her sister which has persisted through various writings about the Yeats family; living longer (until 1949) enabled her to cast herself, without fear of contradiction, in the better light.

Hardwick has made a good job of reinstating Lolly, whose prickliness and impatience strike a contemporary note; but she hasn't shown any special insight into the background or psychology of her subjects. However, it does bring home to us the extent of the sisters' achievement in the face of such obstacles as a shaky education, uncertain social standing, superior brother, gadabout father, and no outstanding personal attractions. *The Yeats Sisters* is a workmanlike account of two workaday women.

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The Soviet film *Kandareika* (1929), directed by Lev Kuleshov, shows the titular "Happy Canary", a chanteuse at the fashionable resort of the Black Sea. The film is a masterpiece of early Soviet cinema, featuring a mix of comedy and drama. It is now being shown at the National Film Theatre in London.

Feel-good malice and futurist mirrors

Delia Ephron's tale of sibling rivalry is more than a bi-coastal *Three Sisters*, says Christopher Hawtree

I think I can claim that this was the first English novel in which dialogue on the telephone plays a large part," said Evelyn Waugh, 35 years after *Vile Bodies*. The device's function in 20th-century literature has yet to receive full study, as does another question: how does Armistead Maupin find time for his own work in between supplying benisons for the dust jackets of everybody else's books? Such is his enthusiasm for this first, telephone-driven novel by Delia Ephron, sister of Nora, that he has come up with separate words of praise for the front and back flaps.

His advice to curl up with it "but unplug the phone first" is not misplaced. This tale of three sisters — Eve, Georgia and Madeleine Mozell — might not give Chekhov a run for his money, but certainly shows that getting to a city (in this case, two cities) does not make relationships any less vexing. *Hanging Up* not only switches

Hanging Up

by Delia Ephron

Fourth Estate, £9.99

between the West Coast and New York but also, and often for the briefest of moments, cuts to and fro in time. (Doubtless the movie to be made by Nora will straighten this out and dull the effect.) One never feels lost in this narrative of sibling rivalry which began with the girls' upbringing in a household whose patriarch was a manic-depressive radio scriptwriter and such an alcoholic that his wife upped and left them all to it.

She is now somewhere in the backwoods as events come to a climax with the father, Lou's, increasing decay, incarceration and imminent death. Eve, outwardly the most

equable of the sisters, narrates all this amid the onset of turmoil from which she does not prove immune. Not only has her son smashed the motor-car into an Iranian's, but the victim looks as if he thinks it unethical to settle the matter without a premium-hiking claim on the insurance company — a situation compounded by the fellow's malapropisms and by enlisting his own mother's help.

Such moments — all these disembodied, omnipresent voices — have Eve looking in the mirror and, at 44, finding that "these sideways, unexpected encounters are the most jarring, these candid glimpses when I have not taken time to prepare my face to be seen and my brain to see it... I look the way I always have, but the face of the future is threatening to take over. I have two faces in one, a non-returnable bargain."

In New York, meanwhile, Georgia is preoccupied with her glossy magazine's

anniversary issue (she has the bold stroke of putting her own face on the cover — now there's a tip for the newly-transplanted Glenda Bailey if she wants to make a wow of *Marie Claire* in Manhattan). Georgia's father is dying, but she has first to consider the stop-press matter of eggplant recipes — are they passé? — before she can fly back. As for Madeleine, she is pregnant, a fork in the road for any soap actress.

As with Carrie Fisher's *Postcards from the Edge*, it is tempting to wonder how much all this has in common with the Ephron family history — no blushing violets, they. One is on safer ground in saying that *Hanging Up* does not go in with a scalpel but has that American quality of feel-good malice — the light, sassy wit, ear for talk and bemused observation that Henry Ephron brought to the plays and movie scripts he wrote with his wife, Phoebe. High time that somebody here issued his account of those years. *We Thought We Could Do Anything*.

Ground control to Major Tomski

A marooned astronaut muses on Russia. Paul Pickering is entranced

An unnamed Cosmonaut circles the earth every 89 minutes in his space station, Mir IV. The rest of the crew left on day 36 of his mission but, because of a rocket malfunction and the famous Russian inertia, he is left alone marooned in his craft on day 171, all hope of rescue abandoned.

Ground control, post-*perestroika*, have not only written off the odds, picking up scraps and pretending it was a banquet fit for a tsar or a commissar. Digging in the snow, he was waiting with an infinite patience for a summer he felt had to come one day.

The details of sleeper-train prostitutes and drug dealers are just as compelling. Booth understands that Russian sentimentality is only the other side of the rouble from cruelty. Our sensitive hero, able to grieve for his friends and savour a sunset turning the fir trees golden, shoots a boy prisoner in Afghanistan. "Just for those few moments, I was a god..."

What slightly spoils the dramatic impact of that scene is his enormous erection: "my cock was as hard as a broom handle." I cannot imagine this ever happening to our own Biggles, although it might explain why everyone walks so stiffly in Eisenstein films.

But Booth establishes his character in the reader's imagination so well the odd lapses are permitted. The cosmonaut realises that while not a god at least he is free, which is what the phrase "ocean of mercy" signifies. A girlfriend, Shura, likes to walk naked through the standing wheat; she says that after love-making the wheat is an ocean of mercy. "I never understood exactly what she meant until now as I realise, spinning through space with my future laid out like a Persian carpet before me..."

The spaceman contemplates his end with dignity. He can measure his lifespan in the amount of food left. The waste-disposal system is packing up and the cosmonaut makes a last choice it would be churlish to reveal. Martin Booth has moulded an excellent idea into a wonderful novel which celebrates the Russian soul and serves as an uncomfortable metaphor for the solitary writer. Definitely a novel to divert you if lost in space.

Adrift in the Oceans of Mercy
by Martin Booth
Simon & Schuster, £15.99

Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst

Saint Rachel by Michael Bracewell (Vintage, £5.99). Feeling as run-down as the Mayfair club into which he has moved, John treats himself to a lavender-scented bath and once again runs through the closing scenes of his failing marriage.

Bracewell's musings on post-marital depression and his accompanying snapshots of comfortable London living (Soho restaurants, ivory-coloured duvets, Prozac dependency and unlikely sex) are nicely done, but in the end more suited to the inches of a personal column than the pages of a novel. A book with a fragile storyline, its highly dramatic conclusion might leave you laughing.

Bold in her Breeches edited by Jo Stanley (Pandora, £7.99). From Pirate Queens to swash-buckling lasses, many a girl's heart has thrilled to the song of the Jolly Roger. There was Grace O'Malley and her fearsome Irish fleet, and those lively old salts Mary Read and Ann Bonny who so delighted 18th-century chroniclers with their tales of amorous adventures and cross-dressing. A collection of essays which reclaims these sea-faring women from the stuff of myth, and remembers those who skivvied, cooked and slept their way across the high seas. Strong on dramatic personae, less watertight on historical analysis.

Perfect Love by Elizabeth Buchan (Pan Books, £5.99). If you like Joanna Trollope or Mary

Wesley, Elizabeth Buchan is for you. Set in a small village outside Winchester, *True Valour* divides her time between the local bookshop and daily runs to the station. It's a world where dogs and husbands share similar names (Max, Mungo, Cosmo) and similar natures. So it comes as some surprise when virtuous Prue finds herself falling for her stepdaughter's man. A light-hearted portrait of a home counties marriage — if it's that kind of thing that gets your Horlicks bubbling.

School for Women by Jane Miller (Virago, £8.99). For over a century, education has been in the hands of women. Today 60 per cent of all teachers in Britain are women, but it's a fact barely acknowledged in any public discussion of the subject. In an absorbing series of essays, Jane Miller traces the "long and choppy" history of women in teaching both here and in the States (*Little House on the Prairie*, *Anne of Green Gables* etc), and looks at current debates in education: particularly at why girls' increasing success in the classroom is viewed with such alarm.

The Country Ahead of Us, the Country Behind by David Guterson (Bloomsbury, £5.99). Pin-sharp stories from a writer who has been compared with Raymond Carver. Mostly set in northwestern America, they share a common theme of loss of innocence. Poignant, oddly potent, they often jump in time: a man caught in a fragmenting relationship recalls his disturbing sexual awakening as a teenager; a boy who prizes baseball above his girlfriend emerges as a man obsessed by the "widening aloneness" of maturity.

Dina's Book by Herbjørn Wassmo (Black Swan, £6.99). It must be the call of ancestral voices, but the British seem irresistibly drawn to satires set in lands snowier and more ice-bound than their own. Even better than Peter Hoeg in this respect, Herbjørn Wassmo's novel (a bestseller in her native Norway) features tinkling sleighbells, raging fjords and candle-lit castles. In a story of gothic proportions, a young girl of noble birth scalds her mother to death with a kettle of red-hot lye, and goes on to develop a passion for savagery in all its forms. If it wasn't Norwegian, it might be considered a load of *schitsschappen*.

Pictures from the Water Trade by David John Morley (Abacus, £7.99). From sleazy bars and strip joints (the "water trade"), to the austere propriety of the domestic milieu, Morley probes Japanese society as no Western writer before. But why adopt an alter-ego named Boon for the task? The answer is sex. An affair with a bar girl is described in salacious detail. For all his brilliant insights and in-depth knowledge of this alien culture, Morley has a berg-sized chunk of ice at the heart of his soul.

If This Is a Man/The Truce by Primo Levi (Vintage, £7.99). Two tremendous autobiographical works based on Levi's 11-month incarceration in Auschwitz — only three survived of the 650 who

arrived on his train — and his slow, circuitous return to Italy. Despite the inconceivable horrors described here, this is not a difficult book to read. Levi's superb, elegant prose is itself a beacon of humanity. But back home in Turin, the camp's "feared and expected" dawn command continued to dominate his dreams: "get up, Wsiwacch".

Efforts at Truth by Nicholas Mosley (Minerva, £7.99). More "notes towards an autobiography" than a polished account, combining musings, theology and lit crit of the N Mosley oeuvre. Instead of the usual nursery memories, this book kicks off with an in-depth analysis of his first novel. Though a bit

self-indulgent and po-faced, his absorption with ideas produces a stimulating read. Things are enlivened by a brush with Hollywood, several affairs and vicious family feuding, with his father, Oswald, spouting racism for years after the war.

Software for the Self by Anthony Smith (Faber, £7.99). Buttressed by a torrent of showy references, Smith offers a sketchy examination of how culture has been redefined over the past couple of centuries. He peaks in a frenzy of excitement about the new electronic toys: "we are entering a realm of high definition, interactive and mutually convergent technologies of communication." It never seems to occur to him that virtual reality really could be a dud or the superhighway might remain the preserve of anoraks.

Audiobooks

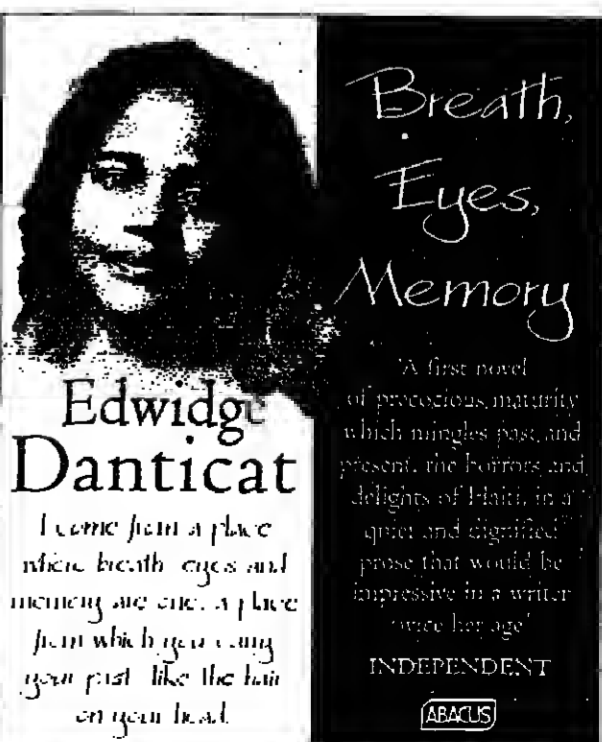


Oscar Wilde
read by Martin Jarvis
In Your Garden: Spring & Summer
read by Janet McTeer

The melodrama and rhetoric of a trial is perfect for audio. Giles Brandreth's selection from the transcripts of the three 1895 trials that spell the doom of Oscar Wilde (CSA, 150 mins, £7.99) puts over both Wilde's irrespressible wit and his enemies' vindictiveness. Multi-track recordings allow Martin Jarvis, one minute all effervescent aesthete, next all ponderous QC, to interrupt and answer back in a way that is pure theatre rather than mere reading.

Converts to gardening in a Walkman will find *Vita Sackville-West's In Your Garden: Spring & Summer* (Cover-to-Cover, 130 mins, £7.99) sheer delight. Originally collected *Observer* columns published in 1951, now soothingly read by Janet McTeer, it is packed full of useful hints, timely reminders and infectious enthusiasm. The sequel, *Autumn & Winter*, is also available.

Christina Hardymont



There's a fight over the River Wye: conservationists want to preserve the peace; developers see its business potential

By Michael Prestage



Conservation versus pleasure boats on the Wye
Photo: Rob Stratton

For centuries the River Wye has attracted thousands of visitors, drawn by its great scenic and natural beauty. In 1798 William Wordsworth penned *Lines Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey* during a visit to the river. "How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, O Sylvan Wye! though wanderer through the woods," he wrote.

Unfortunately, in recent years more and more people have turned to the Wye – a river of major importance for conservation because it has a largely natural regime and has remained free from pollution.

Their interest has often extended beyond sitting on its banks, notepad in hand, composing poetry. While the river still attracts walkers, it also numbers canoeists, rafters, and pleasure-boat owners among its regulars. And its status as a salmon river brings game fishermen willing to spend a pretty pound in pursuit of their sport.

Until now, the disparate devotees of the river have co-existed in an uneasy truce. But the seemingly dry topic of navigation rights has shattered that peace.

There are two bids for the navigation rights, which convey a stake in the management of the river – power is shared with the National Rivers Authority (NRA), the national guardian of the aqueous environment, which has limited powers to make by-laws for the river.

One bid is from the NRA itself, which

sees such a move as a natural extension of its present powers. The other contender is a group of businessmen seeking to revive an old company, incorporated by Parliament in 1809, The Company of Proprietors of the Rivers Wye and Lugg Navigation and Horse Towing Path.

Now lawyers are being hired and history books scoured as both sides pursue their case. The NRA is accused by its critics of being in cahoots with the landed gentry who have the fishing rights and want to preserve the status quo. Those wishing to revive the ancient company and develop the river commercially are seen as get-rich-quick interlopers.

Sporting organisations are assessing which lobby will best favour their vested interests. For instance, the river hosts the annual 100-mile River Wye Charity Raft Race, the longest event of its kind in the world, and those who organise it want to be allowed to continue.

Below Hay-on-Wye, down to the Severn Estuary at Chepstow, there are 100 miles of free navigation on the river. But moves are afoot to impose regulations.

The NRA points to conflicts of interest that have arisen between various user groups such as canoeists, rafters and anglers. It argues that without controls "there is a risk that recreational use of the river will conflict with nature conservation and damage the environment or disturb wildlife."

Dr John Stoner, NRA regional gen-

eral manager, said: "The River Wye and its catchment is a river system of great importance. We must safeguard its unique character. We believe this is the right time to try to secure the balanced use of the river for the benefit of this and future generations."

It is a view echoed by conservation groups, including English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), who both back the NRA's attempt to take on the navigation rights. Ray Woods, an area officer for the CCW, said the navigation rights were a complex issue, but there would certainly be concern if the towing path company's proposals to introduce weirs and locks were to be implemented.

The river has Site of Special Scientific Interest status, and there are proposals to re-notify the Wye in the new Wildlife and Countryside Act and pave the way for it to be the first river in Britain to be made a Special Area of Conservation.

"The River Wye is special for a whole host of reasons. It supports rare species, including two types of shad, the Allis and the Twait, and because no impermeable barriers have been introduced, and there has been no pollution, it is one of the most natural rivers in Britain," he said.

Conservationists are happy that the River Wye is not inundated with visitors. As regards boating and tourism it has not been extensively marketed, but that could change. Critics of those with a more commercial approach to the

river fear "another Richmond on Thames".

And those involved with the towing path company believe that the river could be better exploited commercially. Installing locks and weirs, and dredging, would open the river up to pleasure boats as far as Hay-on-Wye and bring valuable tourism revenue.

The NRA has taken legal action to have the towing path company bid overturned, while at the same time embarking on a public consultation exercise before proceeding with its own legal claim to the rights. The first round in the fight went to the NRA after High Court proceedings were taken against Mr Victor Stockinger, a New Zealand lawyer who is handling the towing path company claim. The Court did not support Mr Stockinger's claim to act as "governor" of the old company.

However, the search is on by those backing the towing path company to find the old shares, and they are confident the first legal setback will be overturned. Both parties were due back in court last month (Feb 15) to hear an appeal by Mr Stockinger against the ruling.

Des Davies, landlord of a Hereford pub and a prime mover behind the company, said: "We decided to revive the company because the river is dying. Salmon numbers are falling because the river is silting up. As a child I can remember catching eels when the river was black with them. They have disappeared now."

He said the river was navigable to vessels up to 1856. A cider mill at Bredwardene was built with stone brought up river by barge. Research has shown, he claims, that locks existed on the river. "We don't want to damage the environment, but we do want to breathe new life back into the river."

If the company can be revived it hopes to build 22 locks and weirs. Its backers believe that the tourism the company will attract will create 1,000 jobs along the river.

Those supporting the bid include Hereford City Council, which believes that the city and its riverside environs would benefit, and investors are standing by to finance it.

Charles Willis, the council's chief executive, said: "We are opposed to the idea of the NRA becoming the navigable authority because it wants to suppress navigation. The Wye is a dreadfully wasted resource. Once Hereford built ocean-going ships. Now it is impossible to reach the ocean because there is so little water."

The council sees economic development as a spin-off for the area. "We would like to see people navigate the river in pleasure boats, stop overnight and spend money here. We think this could be done without environmental damage," Mr Willis said.

The legal fight is certain to continue. In the meantime, those who use the river for pleasure and profit will have to try and get along until a statutory control is established.

COUNTRY PURSUITS



Will O'Leary, stonemason based at Knucklass, Powys

"I get out of bed at 8am and take a cup of coffee into my study. I design most of my commissions and like to spend a whole week doing the drawings before going to the workshop. I have three headstones on the go at the moment. They all have to be drawn out, executed and fixed at the site."

"All the carving and lettering is done by hand. For some masonry, I use a compressor and pneumatic chisels, but I prefer to work with my bare hands. Horrible modern monumental masons use machines; computer-generated letters on a stencil, applied to the stone and sand-blasted. They never do anything by hand at all."

"If I use a lot of a particular stone then I go to the quarry – I like to check it's top quality. I was using so much Forest of Dean sandstone for the restoration work on Kingsland Church in Herefordshire, I went to meet the quarrymen. It's interesting to find out about the geology of stone. In masonry, you should know about your material; you need to know its compressive strength. Some stone even smells: Portland stone has a lovely fishy smell, but Forest of Dean smells pretty horrible – a nasty, musty odour."

"Every commission is a one-off. I always think I would like another job, like the Mary Morgan memorial, for example. She was an early 19th-century woman hanged for the murder of her new-born son. The original stone was falling apart and I had to do an exact replica. That was fascinating – it is very difficult to do a faithful copy: even though you are tracing it, you can never get the spirit of the original cutter. Many of my jobs are memorials, which I do in my workshop. Then I go to the cemetery to fix the head stone with my wife and baby daughter."

"If I am doing a church restoration, I have to be on site, which means up the scaffold. I did a local church last winter. I took a few days off when it was snowing, but otherwise I worked through the elements. In the summer, it's lovely up a scaffold. I especially enjoyed Bath Abbey – great view."

"The most interesting job I did was building the Memorial Pagoda at Milton Keynes in memory of a Buddhist monk. I wasn't under any time pressures and designed a lot of the detail, but now I have a family I don't like to go off for weeks on end."

"I tend to knock off at 7 or 8 in the summer and 6.30 in the winter. You can't work late into the night – it takes too much concentration. And I don't like working more than eight hours in a day. I get too exhausted. A lot of it depends on light in the workshop – in the winter especially. You can't do lettering in bad light."

"Once a week we run an evening class for six or seven people to do carving. In the summer, we run weekend courses. They are knackered and a bit annoying because people always do nicer things than I get to do. I would like to take my own course so I could do exactly what I wanted."

"I love my work. I really do. It can get a bit exasperating, but then anything gets tiring if you do it for too long. Even thinking about it makes me excited, but by bedtime I am so worn out. I simply pass out."

Bel Crewe

A little local trouble

This has not been a happy week for two of Scotland's island communities. The residents of Graemesay, in the Orkneys, are in a fighting mood after council members voted to axe the island's only school. The closure of Graemesay School will mean that its lone pupil, nine-year-old Kevin Pepper, will now have to travel by ferry to school in Stromness on the mainland. This week the news was announced that production problems have delayed a new ferry service.

On Eigg, it is the plight of the island's cattle that has infuriated the locals. On Tuesday the island's owner Maruma, sold all the remaining beasts bar one – Barney the Limousin Bull, father of nearly all the island's cattle. Poor Barney failed to sell because of missing papers and will go under the hammer at a later date. For Eigg islanders the sale was a tragedy. Stockman Donald McFadyen told *The Herald*: "I don't know how they will adapt to the climate in other parts of the country." Now residents fear this is the start of something more sinister and rumours of an island clearance are rife.

'Was I witnessing a high-level wife-swap?'

This is the season when birds and animals stake out breeding territories and none of our resident species make more noise about it than the buzzards. The other evening, whistles burst out from both sides of the valley. The first calls rang from the wood on the hill to the south, my right, instantly answered by others from my left. Seconds later a big, dark shape floated over from the south, black against the sky. Then a second appeared from the north. A pair coming together? Apparently not like ships in the night, the two passed each other and carried on without the least deviation. Was I witnessing a high-level wife-swap?

Then two birds soared over the southern skyline, wheeling in circles. Suddenly another pair appeared low over my head. Cries blasted off from every direction. A fifth bird started calling from somewhere behind me. The squeals of little owls were drowned out by the piercing volleys from overhead. Not until darkness fell did the big hawks at last settle and fall silent. Almost as vocifer-



DUFF HART-DAVIS

ous are the carrion crows, the most voracious predators of other birds' eggs and fledglings. Every morning crows take up vantage points and proclaim their local supremacy with loud, harsh calls.

On land patrolled by gamekeepers, the rabbit is often their undoing, for it enables the keeper to pinpoint their nesting sites. One man I know keeps the stuffed skin of a fox especially for this purpose: set out in a field a short distance from the edge of a wood, the bright russet decoy proves an irresistible lure. Cruising crows swoop down to mob it, and the keeper, lurking in a hide with his shotgun, picks them off one by one.

So effective is the fox, in

fact, that buzzards frequently borrow it, and it whizzes about the country with a mobility it never achieves in life. By such means, keepers can ensure that their own ground will be clear for the critical months in which game birds breed, because at a certain point, all surviving crows settle down to nest in whatever territories they occupy and no more cross-country movement takes place.

It is not only the predators which move around. Even humble rabbits seem to migrate about now, moving down out of the woods, in which they have spent the winter, to breed in the hedgerow burrows which form their summer homes.

The only creatures which seem hell-bent on staying put are the greylag geese on our neighbour's farm. In past years one or two pairs have arrived in February and bred on the lake in the valley; then, come autumn, they have taken off for wintering grounds elsewhere.

Last summer, however, they seemed so congenial that they never left. Three pairs of parents raised a total of 13

goslings, so that by August there were 19 hefty birds devouring the grass and messing up the fields with their slimy droppings. The longer they stayed, the more irritated the farmer became, but he found fond of all wildlife, he could not bring himself to shoot them.

There they remained throughout the winter, and now, as the mating urge comes on them, chaos reigns in the flock. The ganders are constantly demonstrating – hissing, thrashing their wings, shaking their heads and extending their necks in menacing fashion – and it is hard to see how so many geese are going to settle down in one relatively small area: there are not enough individual territories to go round.

No doubt nature will sort things out somehow. It may be that, if the birds are all closely related anyway, this year's eggs will prove infertile and produce no offspring. Should that happen, migratory instincts will probably reassert themselves, and autumn will once again see the geese on their way.

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Gavin Green visits the Geneva motor show, an opulent exhibition for Europe's richest car owners

Although it replaces the XJS, it's really more of an E-type successor—that seminal Sixties sports car that was unveiled at the Geneva Show exactly 35 years ago. The XK8 is more of a sports car (like the E-type) than a lazy boulevard cruiser

The other big news in the German corner was the comeback of the Beetle. VW announced that its Concept One show car - a Beetle for the Nineties - which was first unveiled two years ago, will go on sale in 1998 at about

The Geneva Motor Show, Palexpo exhibition centre (next to the airport) runs until 17 March.



Stars of this year's show: top, the Jaguar XK8; middle left, VW's New Beetle; middle right, Renault's clever Scenic; and left, the Mercedes E-class estate

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Scotland's near-perfect union of landscape and artifice

By Simon Calder



Above: Prince's Street, the wide heart of Edinburgh. Right: *Trainspotting* anti-hero Renton

Main photographs: Simon Calder

Never mind heritage. What about sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll (but mostly drugs), interleaved with squalor? Irvine Welsh's story *Trainspotting* has succeeded where UNESCO failed, putting Edinburgh on everyone's map. The city's tourist board is probably horrified.

Dawn reveals Edinburgh's skyline to be a near-perfect collage of landscape and artifice. In some ancient seismicological scuffle, a scattering of peaks sprouted in the heart of what is now Lothian. Tall and weatherworn, Arthur's Seat provides a blustery platform, precisely 823 feet above the glassy Firth of Forth that confines the city's expansion north. At about the height of Arthur's calf, the Salisbury Crags jut into the first fringe of habitation. Beyond these jagged rocks are the softer lines of Calton Hill, a dome of stone that punctuates the east end of the city centre. Three structures deck it: the Observatory, an array of Classical columns that suggests an early attempt to bolster the cliché "Athens of the North", and a cairn symbolising hopes for the restoration

of a Scottish parliament. That huge, blunted wedge in the middle of your field of vision supports the Castle, whose garrisons have enforced the 1707 Act of Union for nearly three centuries. Dotted stone houses cling to its skirts and melt into its volcanic crumples to form the Old Town, while to the north the first ruddy flickers of sun alight on the stern Georgian rooftops of the New Town.

No Crawley or East Kilbride this – when town planning was conceived in Edinburgh, elegance and order were valued more than economy and compromise. Old and New Towns have just been recognised as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, a fact of which few seem to be aware.

Queensferry Road draws your eye past the Water of Leith towards the hills of Fife, linked to Lothian by the twin pillars of the Forth Road Bridge that march north into the bleary haze. Amazing: out yet seven o'clock and already you're familiar with Scotland's capital.

Except, of course, you're not. To become even a passing acquaintance of this schizophrenic city, you need to

work hard at the relationship. You can tickle the underbelly if you wish (see the *Trainspotting* location guide, right), but most visitors will prefer to keep a straighter, narrower path through the city's core. Prince's Street has pride of view, open along one side in the finest civic landscape in Britain. But the Royal Mile is yet richer, the stuff of World Heritage and the magnet to which every traveller is drawn.

Start at the city's first-ever tourist attraction. The Honours of Scotland comprise the country's crown jewels: a sword, mitre and richly jewelled crown. They evaded successive raids until the Act of Union, when the constitutional trappings of Scottish royalty were consigned to a casket in the Castle. In 1819, the chest was opened and put on public display. A coterminous official office anticipates the need to regulate tourism: "150 persons only will be admitted every lawful day, between 10 and three o'clock."

Today, thousands of tourists infiltrate the Castle every day, and pay £5 rather than five pence for the privilege. For that, you get to borrow a

state-of-the-art audio-CD player, rich in sound effects, that puts the confusion of battlements in perspective; shame about the red Ford Sierra parked among the cannon.

The tourist trail is all downhill from here. One Scots mile east (further than the Imperial version), the Queen's third official residence makes up in atmosphere what it lacks in stature. Unlike the showy Royal piles of Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, Holyrood Palace is a masterpiece in gaunt, grey stone. To one side, the shattered remains of Holyrood Abbey dissolve into the mist, the peace disturbed only by rumbles on the road to London: the A1 begins a few hundred Scots yards from here.

Between its noble bookends, the Royal Mile is an eminently democratic thoroughfare. Places such as the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre take the tourist-as-marketing-opportunity approach, and tempt in visitors with the prospect of a blended thimbleful of product after an hour of soft sell. But if you just want a pint of milk and a paper, then head downhill to find one of the more proletarian (and

practical) shops. All the way along, you feel constrained by the tall, brooding stone on either side, the sombre tones mirrored in the line of battered cobbles that guides you along the royal prospect. At the Heart of Midlothian, a coronary-shaped cobble halfway along, watch how many passers-by pause to exorcise on the stone. Locals and tourists spit freely and hope for good luck.

Looking for this spectacle is the best way to locate Parliament Square, in a capital whose national assembly was "adjourned" 300 years ago. Close to the Heart, but tucked behind the High Kirk of St Giles, you find a car park. This is Parliament Square – and the burial place of the Protestant reformer John Knox. He lies beneath space numbered 41. Fine busts strokes decorate many of Edinburgh's nooks, but this artlessly stencilled paint above the tomb of one of the city's most influential figures does not count among them. World Heritage is a strange affair in Scotland.

Edinburgh tourist information:
0131-557 1700.

Everything you need to know to go *Trainspotting* in Edinburgh



The first time I went to the cinema in Edinburgh, my grandmother took my brother and me to see *The Sound of Music*. Last Sunday, we siblings went to the movies in the Scottish capital again, but declined to invite her along. A friend gave grandparental guidance about *Trainspotting*, suggesting that wholesome Julie Andrews types were in short supply.

Trainspotting is an express ride around my grandmother's home town, focusing on the margins and the marginals – the underclass that figure in statistics for crime and HIV. Edelweiss is out, the opium poppy is in.

The film starts on Prince's Street, where the anti-heroes, Renton and Spud, are fleeing from security staff at John Menzies. They live a hand-to-vein existence along the road in Leith. Parts of this venerable port retain their mercantile good looks, but much has been laid waste and replaced by "schemes" – council housing estates. Renton, Spud and pals are "schemies", surviving in a filthy flat. The shoplifters are finally apprehended heading towards Leith along Calton Road, one of the many streets off middle-class Prince's Street.

The ensuing court case is held among the legal clutter at the heart of the Royal Mile and Renton immediately celebrates the suspension of his sentence at a pub. The film is unspecific about precisely which one of the 1,000-plus licensed candidates is chosen, but the book indicates the obvious one: Deacon Brodie's. Here a screenplay or two interjects. William Brodie was a local worthy who led a double life. According to a 1788 edition of the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, after dark he became "a gambler, a thief, dissipated and licentious". He fled to Amsterdam (as, later, does Renton) and was banded the same year. He became the model for Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, currently in production. At the end of the film of *Pride of Miss Jean Brodie*, the anti-heroine reveals she is a descendant of the erring deacon.

After a pint or two of Deacon's Best, go in search of the Worst Toilet in Scotland. The closest you will get, thankfully, is the angular disarray of apartment blocks and shops on Pennywell Gardens, west of the centre. Suddenly you cross the invisible frontier into safe family values. The verdant parkland is exactly the sort of place where you would take your Gran for a walk. Just watch out for Renton and his air rifle lurking in the bushes.

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2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete each task.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress regularly to ensure that the project is on track.

5. The final step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves comparing the actual outcomes with the objectives and goals to determine the effectiveness of the project and identify areas for improvement.

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(Golf)

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Fancy seeing you here

Sean Thomas felt curiously at home in Java: he found a volcano, a walled city and his local supermarket manager

Twenty miles north of the ancient Javanese capital of Jogjakarta, 500 miles east of the Asian entrepot of Jakarta, halfway up Gunung Merapi – the sacred Javanese "fire mountain" – I walked into a small, dark, fly-blown bar and ran into the manager of my local Sainsbury's, in Islington.

I hadn't planned this; the world just keeps getting smaller. And it was pretty lucky, in a way. For ages I had wondered why Sainsbury's hadn't knocked through a door to the car park. Here, in this lamplit, wood-paneled bar – full of the aromas of frying chilli and fresh coconut milk, wafting in from the street-side eating-stalls (*warungs*) – I got the chance to find out.

The brooding volcano under which we drank and chatted is reputed to be the most active spot in the furiously volcanic archipelago that is Indonesia. She more than lives up to her fearsome reputation. The manager of our hotel (the Vogel, clean and spartan, 8000 rupiah, or four pounds, a night), had told us that to climb the Old Lady we'd have to be up pretty early. Struggling out of bed before dawn we donned our hiking-boots and rucksacks and set off in the direction of the wispy summit. We got as far as the roadblock. Gunung Merapi had woken up with a nasty hangover; she was angrily puffing out clouds of lethal sulphur gas, and coughing up the odd half-ton lava bomb – and I suspect she was in no mood to see a couple of scruffy Brits crawling all over her. Three-quarters of a mile from the main ascent the police turned us back, for our own safety. We didn't really mind: standing on the special viewing-platform we could hear the rumblings of imminent eruption. It was enough.

We hailed one of the Indonesian public minibuses (*bemos*), which are cheap, packed, slow, and plentiful, and travelled into the serene, sprawling, historical city of Jogjakarta ("Jogja" to locals and aficionados). Jogja is the backpacking capital of Java, where discerning Aussies, and others doing the Asian trails tend to congregate, in preference to madcap Jakarta, or touristy Bali. The food here is cheap and good; the hotels are cheap and quite good; there's a legion of services that have sprung up to cater for the post-package traveller – airline agencies, change houses, authentic craft and batik shops. Most of these are situated in the Soso area, near the station.

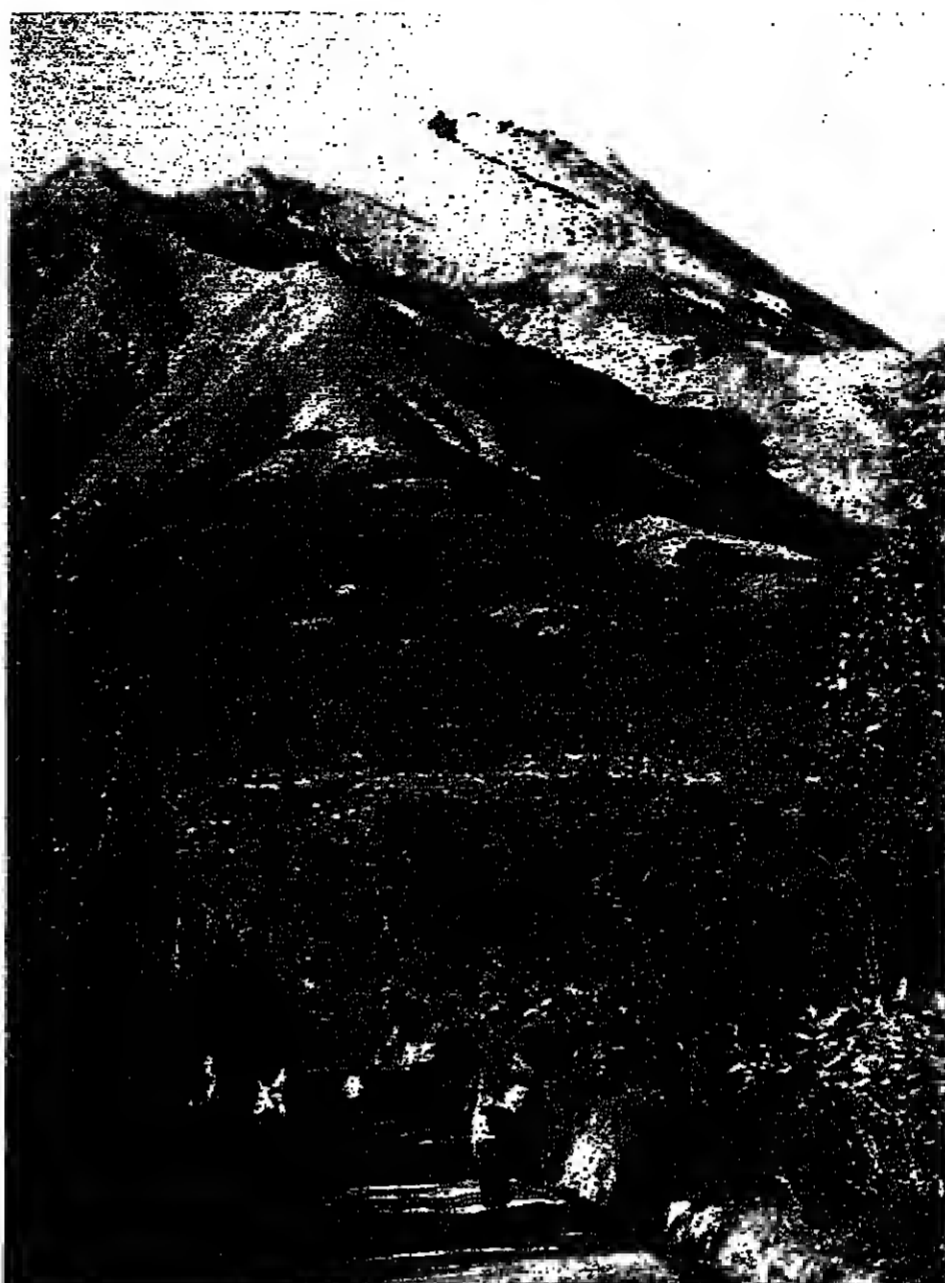
South of Soso lies the ancient centre of the city-state, the sultan's court, or *Kraton*. Here

between 1750 and 1950 the gamelan-playing, dagger-wearing upper classes of Java honed their culture to an exquisite edge; the place still has a slightly superior, aristocratic air. The sultan's palace and parliament – his real power was taken away in the 1940s, after the Indonesians threw off the Dutch yoke – is a disappointing sight. It looks like your grandmother's hangar just outside Newquay, and the gaudy railings and multi-coloured chandeliers are unmistakably nouveau. The surrounding area is more interesting – a walled-off royal city wherein live the courtiers who spend their days glorifying the sultan and his lovely sultana. Lots of the dwellings in this area have cages full of songbirds hanging outside the front door. Walking down one of the flowery alleyways the music of the birds fills your ears – a sweet, liquid lullaby.

The absence of obvious religious buildings in the walled city exposes one of the peculiarities of Indonesian life. The country – all 1,900,000 square miles of it – is said to be 90 per cent Muslim. But Indonesia has adopted a very mild form of the faith, in deference to its Christian and animist peoples, and its Buddhist background. Take a half-hour *bemo*-ride from central Jogja to Borobudur, and you can see how deeply rooted the old faith is. Borobudur is a huge Buddhist temple that sits amidst the rainy green lushness of coffee fields like an enormous grey cowpat. Carved in the eighth century, this lava-stone temple is said to be the third greatest Buddhist monument in the world, after Cambodia's Angkor Wat and Burma's Pagan. I don't know about the bronze-medal rating: it's certainly a calming, spiritual place. I spent a whole day marvelling at Borobudur's delicate sculptures, climbing its vertiginous steps, dodging its sapphire-blue dragonflies, and watching the thunder and lightning play across the dark mountain-scape to the west.

Between Jogjakarta and Jakarta lies the real Java: green, beautiful, volcanic, superfertile, chocker with people.

Everywhere you look – if you aren't looking at palm groves and banyan trees and water buffaloes and torrential rivers of milk-chocolate brown water – you can see people tilling the fields in black upside-down-saucer hats, or picking tea, or whipping cows, or bicycling home from work: from the silversmiths, or the woodcarvers, or the Japanese motorbike factory.



Gunung Merapi, the sacred Javanese "fire mountain"

Photograph: Robert Harding



SIMON CALDER

Buy a seat-only deal on a charter flight. And you may get more than just a ticket.

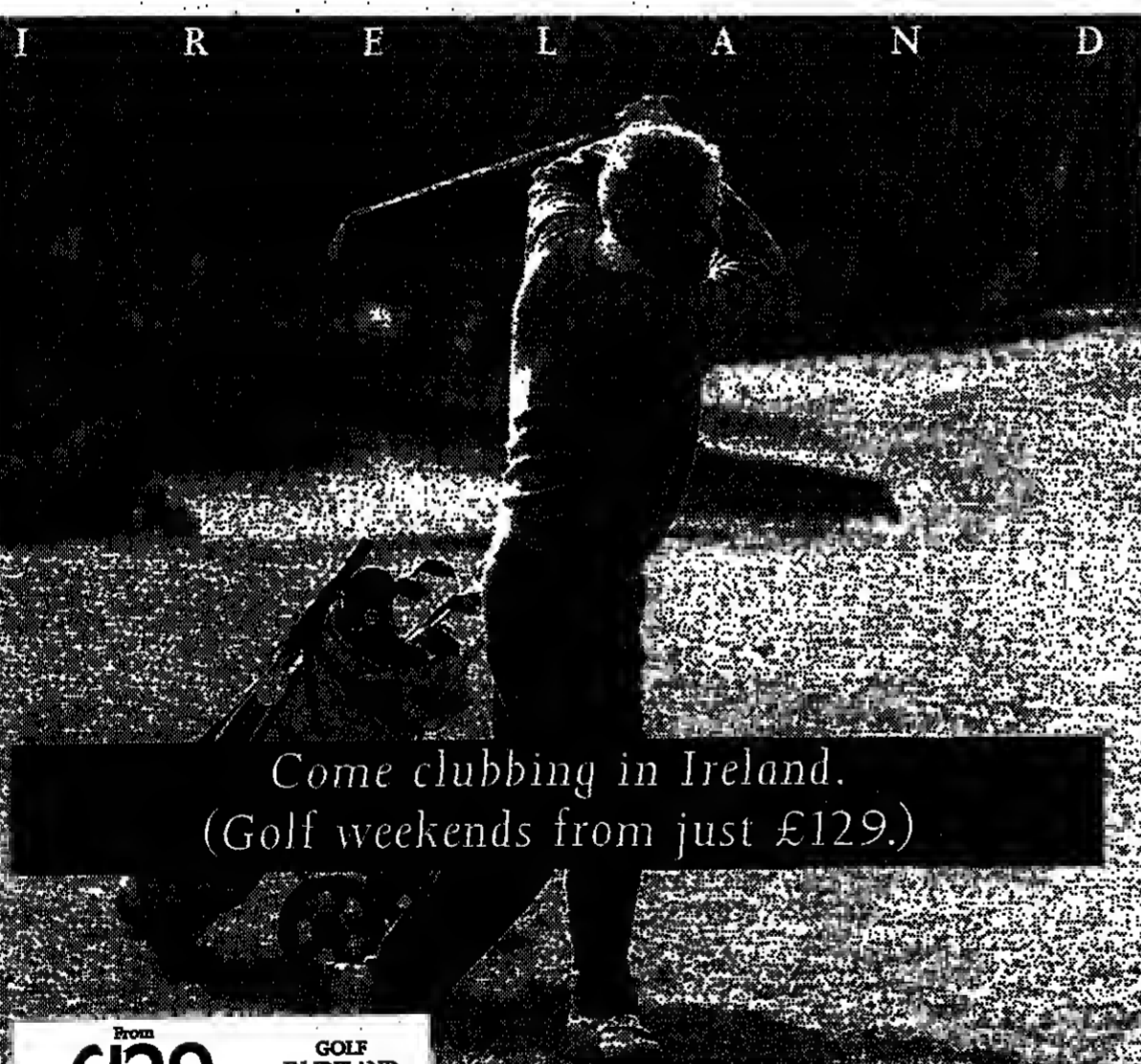
Often the tour operator will issue an accommodation voucher, to maintain the fiction that you are being sold an inclusive holiday rather than simply a cheap flight. You are not expected to take up the offer. On a Thomson charter to Athens, I arrived at the allocated hotel and asked to be shown to my room. Instead, I was shown two things: first, the notice threatening heavy "service charges"; second, the door.

It appears I was lucky to be given accommodation in the correct country, let alone the right city. Richard Madge of Bexhill writes with an inside story. He used to work in telephone sales for a tour operator whose policy was to discourage uptake completely. To this end, he was told to supply accommodation "at a campsite 400 miles away across the Slovakian border in the Tatra mountains." Anyone who persisted was warned of "unspecified charges for linen, washing facilities, etc." Mr Madge never heard any complaints from returned customers, and supposes they are still stuck halfway up a central European mountain. The practice, as far as he is aware, continues.

This week TWA joined the ranks of smoke-free airlines between Britain and the United States. Robert Breckman of London writes to suggest that no-children flights are the obvious next step. "Having been subjected to a cacophony of screaming babies on two recent flights, it is surely intolerable that the majority should be held at the vocal mercy of the minority. Parents seem incapable of controlling their infants and hilariously refuse to take any action against the noise."

Mr Breckman accepts that his view may not be universally popular, but says he would be prepared to pay a premium to travel in peace.

Holiday bargains, as Jeremy Skidmore says overleaf, may be in shorter supply this summer than last. But reassurance that Britain's travel industry offers the best value in Europe arrives from Prague. An entrepreneur has combined the cheap coach trip between the Czech capital and London with a standard First Choice package to the Gambia. So if all the sunbeds at your resort have already been reserved by Kafka novels, you'll know why.



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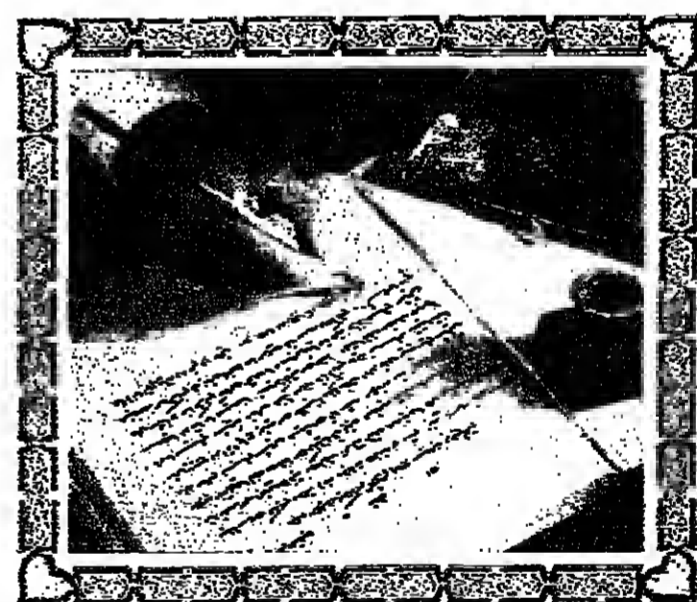
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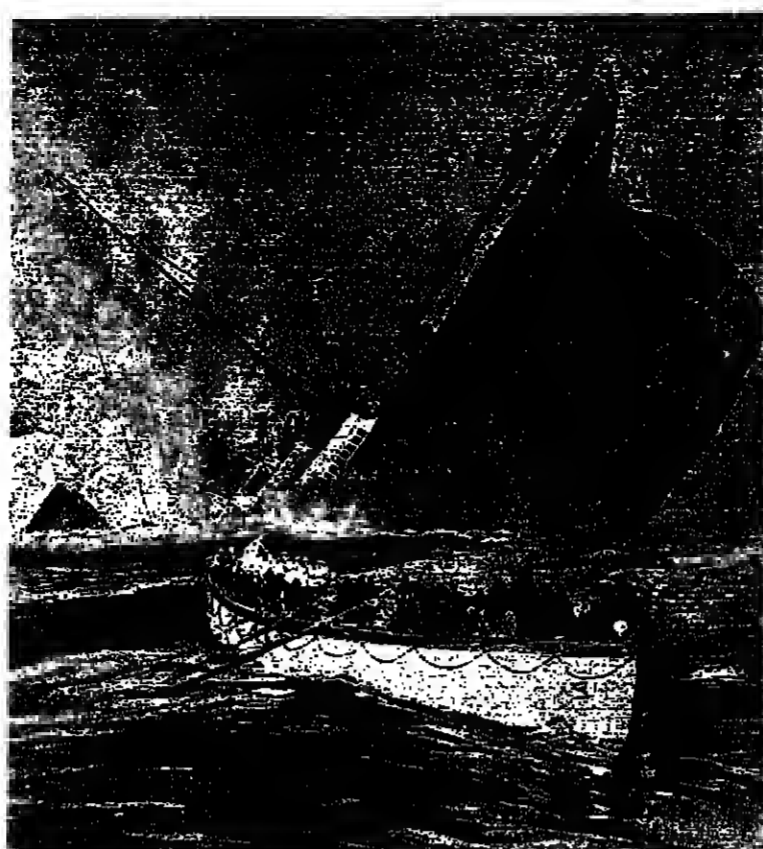
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money

The cost of peace at Lloyd's — but the news may not bring peace of mind for investors facing ruin

Names will learn today how much they are being asked to contribute to the insurance market's £9bn losses. John Eisenhammer, Financial Editor, reports.



Disaster: Being a Lloyd's name was once seen as easy money — but recent years have brought a sinister new meaning to the phrase unlimited liability

Lloyd's names, the investors who put up the cash for the London insurance market, will find on their doormats today the first estimate of the final cost of buying peace at Lloyd's, although it may not buy them peace of mind. Many risk losing their homes and large amounts of money.

There were 34,000 names underwriting at Lloyd's in 1988, but today the number of active names is just over 12,000 — an unparalleled statement of flight and dispossession. Since 1988, Lloyd's of London has racked up losses over £9bn — a devastating turnaround in the fortunes of many names, by definition people of above-average means, who pledged every bit of their wealth to cover eventual liabilities.

Traditionally Lloyd's had been regarded as a safe investment — securities lodged with Lloyd's earned interest, the insurance business made a profit and the cheques rolled in reg-

ularly each year. Unlimited liability was merely a theoretical risk.

Instead Lloyd's provided a stark lesson in the potential risk of financial market involvement. A combination of natural disasters and poor management led to many syndicates of insurers making massive losses. Litigation followed, and angry names refused to pay for what they thought was at best irresponsible behaviour by professional managers, who actually decided what risks to underwrite and what premiums to charge.

To avoid the real risk of Lloyd's itself going bust, the insurance society has devised an unprecedented rescue plan. It is handing off all its pre-1993 policies — notably the ruinous asbestos and pollution liabilities in the US — into a separate re-insurance company called Equitas.

Names are being asked to pay a final, individual premium into Equitas, to cover all the potential liabilities from their old policies. It means that for a price, they can do what has not been possible before — sign a cheque and walk away.

For many names, this means finding more money. To help the settlement, Lloyd's is offering at least £2.8bn in credits and debt forgiveness to names, reducing Equitas bills and buying off litigants. Many thousands of people are facing one of the most difficult financial decisions of their lives. To help, the Independent answers the key questions.

Who is affected? Every one of the 34,000 names. Even if you stopped underwriting some time ago, names remain liable to the end of their days for claims on policies written during the years they were active in the market.

Which is the key figure? The figure on page one, Summary Data of the Indicative Finality Statement. This shows an estimate of what, if anything, you will have to pay Equitas to reinsure all your old policy liabilities and draw a line under your affairs at Lloyd's. For some names, their investments already pledged to Lloyd's will be more than enough to cover the cost of Equitas, and they get some money back. The less fortunate will still need to find more cash.

What do I do? Don't panic even if the bill looks more than you can

afford. Special extra funds are there for the hardest hit. Moreover, these are estimated bills, and final premiums are likely to be lower for most people, because Lloyd's is privately confident it will raise more money to offset names' payments between now and when final statements are dispatched in May.

What do I do next?

Consult your financial adviser and banker. These are highly important decisions with considerable tax implications for some, and time is short. Planning is essential, and Lloyd's requires early notice if you want to take advantage of special schemes and assistance. The deadline for payment of the finality bills is late July.

What if I think it will be hard or impossible to pay my bill?

Inform Lloyd's promptly on the appropriate form. Anyone with an estimated finality bill in excess of their funds at Lloyd's should consider applying for additional credits from the settlement fund. These will be allocated on the basis of need. To assess this, names must submit to rigorous means testing by Lloyd's financial recovery department, declare they have not dissipated assets, and have everything signed off by an accountant.

What are the special schemes?

Lloyd's is planning a special mortgage or loan facility, to help hard-hit names get around the difficulties of age, the complexity of their affairs and the need to raise up to 100 per cent loans against their homes. This could also help names whose funds at Lloyd's are secured by their homes. Repayment could be over 25 years, with no new insurance required. The project depends on enough Names taking it up to make it worthwhile for the lenders. There will also be a structured payment facility, spreading the cost of finality over five years.

Do I have a say in all this?

Yes. The entire Lloyd's settlement plan depends on the outcome of a vote by all names in July, after they have received the final Equitas bills. It will be a choice between finality, at a price, and uncertainty, which could prove more or less expensive in the years to come, as Lloyd's as we know it is wound up, and the lawyers and debt collectors take over.

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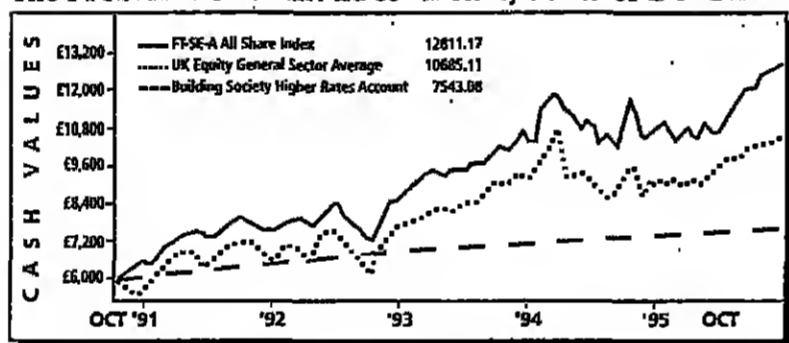
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Barclays Bank is keeping open until March 16 applications from savings account holders to defer interest due in March until after the start of the new tax year, when the tax rate will drop from 25 per cent to 20 per cent for basic rate taxpayers.

The stockbroker Foster & Braithwaite has launched a pension fund investing mainly in zero coupon shares offering a tax-free yield of 7.9 per cent to redemption. It can be used to provide an income by

selling a proportion of the holdings each year.

The Bristol-based Insurance Service is offering discounts of 10 per cent on comprehensive motor policy premiums to drivers of cars over five years old rising to over 20 per cent on cars 10 years old. Managing director Syd Pennington says: "In our experience people who have older cars are less likely to make claims."

Most motor insurance companies have singled out mature and retired motorists as the targets for lower premiums, says the motor insurance specialist Hill House Hammond. Young drivers have missed out because they are all tarred with the irresponsible boy racer brush. HHH has now introduced a Lifestyle rating which takes into account the occupation, professional qualifications, marital status and driving record of individual young drivers, which can cut their motor insurance costs by 50 per cent or more, it claims.

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How to get Bianca and Tiffany out of your property

Ian Hunter on the rights of tenants and landlords in 'EastEnders'

As addicts of BBC's *EastEnders* series will know, Bianca is not having an easy time of it. She believes that her boyfriend Ricky is attempting a reconciliation with his wife Sam. Having thrown Ricky out of their shared flat, incinerating his belongings in the process, she probably believed the worst was over.

The problem is that the flat that she and Ricky were renting is owned by Sam's brother Phil, who – having been persistently pestered by Sam – has put Bianca and her squating friend Tiffany, out on the pavement.

Tenants' rights vary depending on the type of agreement they have reached with their landlords. Enforcing those rights against an aggressive Phil Mitchell is another issue.

Most residential tenants' rights are now governed by the Housing Act 1988. This Act was ushered in to encourage more private landlords into the rental market. The easiest route by which Phil could legally have ensured a swift repossession of his flat was by entering into an assured shorthold tenancy.

This tenancy provides the landlord with the right to terminate the lease on two months' notice at any time after the expiry of the first four months of the lease. As Ricky and Bianca had been in the flat for more than four months, Phil could have asked them to quit on two months' notice.

However, certain procedures have to be followed to ensure that the lessee is given assured shorthold status. This includes serving on the tenants – before the start of the lease – a notice in the prescribed form, which sets out the limited nature of the tenants' rights.

If the correct procedures are not followed, or the landlord and tenant merely reach a verbal understanding, the tenant gains enhanced protection against eviction.

The arrangement is then known as an assured tenancy. The effect of that is that a landlord can only regain possession of the property at the end of the lease if he has successfully proved to the court that it should exercise its discretion in his favour. This compares unfavourably with the assured shorthold tenancy, where the landlord is entitled to possession as of right.

If Bianca and Ricky had been granted an assured tenancy, Phil could have had quite a struggle on his hands. Bianca is unemployed and therefore eligible for legal aid – so with a determined solicitor she could have denied Phil legal access to the property for some time.

In order for the tenants to retain protection against eviction on the expiry of the lease, in the absence of a valid court order, they must continue to live in the property. The tenants should also continue to abide by the terms of the lease, such as paying the rent regularly and carrying out repairs for which they are responsible.

The failure to do so will strengthen the landlord's right to repossession, although it is unlikely a court will order an eviction if the rent is only slightly in arrears.

Even if the landlord is not granted repossession, he can still send the bailiffs to the premises to recover any rent arrears. This can take place on any day except Sunday – but only during the hours of daylight.

The landlord can seize anything of value belonging to the tenant in order to settle the rent arrears. There is one important qualification: he cannot seize possessions such as bedding or clothes, nor can he seize an innocent third party's property. Force may not be used by the landlord to gain entry.

Likewise, force should not be used to evict squatters. According to Joy Bailey, a solicitor with Exeter law firm Austey

Sargent and Probert, "The law governing squatters does have teeth, but if the correct procedures are not followed it is likely to bite back."

If the squatters do not have permission to be there, the procedure should be swift. But Phil may have a problem in proving Tiff and Bianca did not have a right to be there if he was acquiescing in the arrangement. If he has accepted rent the two would have strong grounds for saying they are assured tenants.

A court hearing involving squatters will usually be held within a few days. If the court is satisfied the

entry was unlawful it will issue an immediate warrant for possession to the court bailiffs. The bailiffs will enforce the judgment as soon as possible.

Landlords should in all cases avoid taking the law into their own hands, whether the occupants are unwanted tenants or squatters. The landlord could end up paying damages to the occupants and may be denied possession by a court order while matters are resolved. If anyone is injured, the landlord could even end up with a criminal record – although that is unlikely to frighten the Mitchell brothers.



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money

That crisp £20 note is a fake. How can anyone tell?

Hi-tech criminals can produce forgeries that will fool bank cashiers — and even some anti-counterfeit machines, writes George Campbell



Tracey Cullen was accused of passing them fake notes. But the building society was wrong — the notes were proved quite genuine

Although there were 2,500 prosecutions for passing forged notes last year and some £25m was seized, one banknote in a hundred in circulation is a forgery, and numbers are on the increase. Although many shops and filling stations use a variety of devices, including marker pens and ultra-violet light screens, to detect the cruder fakes, the best forgeries, including £10 and £20 as well as £50 notes, are now almost impossible to detect by eye, thanks to advances in sophisticated computer technology and colour printing. It is estimated that some £100m worth of fake notes are now washing around in the system.

The Bank of England plays down the gravity of the situation. "It's not serious," said a spokesman. "Less than 1 per cent of the £18bn of genuine money in circulation is fake."

Bui critics disagree. John Hall, head of security at the 1,700-strong Co-Operative Wholesale Society chain, reckons it is getting worse: "Over the last year, counterfeit money through our stores has jumped 20 per cent," he said.

A genuine note should feel crisp, have a metallic

strip, a watermark and sharp clear printing. Forgers at the sharp end of technology can now reproduce all these qualities.

The consumer, and not the banks or building societies, takes the hit when a forged note is discovered. Under the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act (1981), anyone passed a fake banknote must hand it to the police with no compensation. Passing on fake notes is a criminal offence.

Banks and building societies, however, are not legally obliged to reimburse you even if they issue you with forged notes through their cash machines. Also, counterfeit notes are now so sophisticated that even experienced cashiers at the counter — not to mention their security equipment — cannot always tell the difference between a real note and a fake.

The Building Society Ombudsman is about to give a decision on a landmark case involving Bradford & Bingley and a Yorkshire housewife. Tracey Cullen took legal action after the society's Selby branch wrongly accused her of including 19 forged notes in a £4,800 cash deposit.

Tracey explained: "It was a nightmare. I was shamed and humiliated by a member of the Bradford & Bingley staff in front of other customers. The woman cashier questioned 19 notes. I was detained in the branch with my eight-month old daughter for 50

minutes. The notes were taken into the manager's office and the police were called."

Mrs Cullen was then frog-marched out of the branch in front of other customers and taken to the police station. After her arrest, police called in experts from Yorkshire Bank to examine the suspected forgeries.

"The police attitude changed completely when the bank said the notes were genuine. I was released on bail pending the outcome of forensic tests by the Bank of England," she explained.

"Next morning, the police informed me the tests had proved conclusively the notes were genuine and the society had dropped the charges."

Counterfeit notes are also plaguing small businesses, according to Stephen Alambritis of the Federation of Small Businesses. "We have heard strong rumours that the banks are instructing their staff to feed fake money back into circulation. Quite often, hard-worked bank staff will sometimes hand the forged note back to the customer to avoid embarrassment."

While acknowledging the problem, the Bank of England argues vehemently against compensating those who lose out to the counterfeiters. The Bank is convinced counterfeiters would turn to making cash out of the compensation fund. "It would be like asking us to

underwrite the crime," says a spokesman.

"Big high street concerns have invested heavily in anti-counterfeiting security," says a spokeswoman for the British Retail Consortium. "Staff are trained to spot dud notes, and the bigger stores will also get regular visits from the police warning them of the latest scams."

A British company has developed a new micro-processor system able to detect forged notes. In trials, it picked out 4,000 fakes provided by the Bank of England and the police, and the makers say it will detect counterfeits which defeat systems that use ultra-violet light or marker pens. Only 10 per cent of the test notes were caught by ultra-violet systems.

John Wilkinson of MEI Electronics in Wokingham, Berkshire, which has developed the new Cashguard, said: "Some of those systems can be fooled by coating a fake note with ordinary suntan oil products."

Cashguard costs £250 and can fit on to a check-out desk or till. A note is inserted in a slot and light with a wide range of wavelengths is shone on to it. Sensors measure how much light is reflected back, and at what wavelengths.

The micro-processor analyses this combination and compares it against a stored profile of the characteristics of valid notes, sounding an alarm for fakes and suspect notes.

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money

'Don't join company pension schemes without advice'

BAD DEALS: In her desire to move on and up in the world of advertising, Marcella Speller made all the right moves. Except when planning her pension

Marcella Speller is marketing director of Internet Holiday Rentals, the first company in the UK to specialise in using the Information Superhighway to promote private homes available for self-catering holidays around the world.

After 10 years in advertising Speller took an MBA and has since held senior and board level marketing appointments with blue-chip companies.

She says that her worst mistake has been the cumulative neglect of her pension plans.

"After graduating at the University of East Anglia in 1971 my first job was with British Rail. During your twenties, of course, you don't even think about pensions, and when I left to join an advertising agency in 1974 it was still the last thing on my mind."

"In my twenties and thirties, while working my way up the career ladder, I had a series of jobs, most of which I left within two years

as I was headhunted for the next one. There was no such thing as a personal pension in those days. The whole pensions industry was designed for people who started work at 16 and weren't expected to leave the company until they were 65.

"When my generation came along, and moving jobs became a way of life, we discovered that you couldn't take your pension with you. Even worse, if you left the company within two years, you didn't get the benefit of employer's contributions. You were simply refunded for payments you had made during the period of your employment."

Over the years Ms Speller worked her way up in a variety of different companies, then in 1981 took a year off to do an MBA, before joining Heineken as senior manager of European projects, based in Amsterdam and Ireland.

"In 1984 I returned to Britain and set up my own business offering consultancy, venture capital and

marketing for hi-tech companies. By then I was 34. I took out a self-employed pension, but I had only paid £1800 into it when I was offered a job as senior marketing manager with Avis. The regulations in those days meant I couldn't have continued with my personal pension even if I had wanted to because I wasn't self-employed any more.

"Instead, my contributions were frozen until I reached 60. I don't know whether I can free them under the new legislation because it's all so complicated. There are so many reams of paper, it's as if they don't want you to understand it."

Between 1985 and 1989 Ms Speller worked for three different companies in senior marketing roles, but each time she was made redundant because of restructuring.



"I wasn't in any of the jobs for as long as two years, so each time they just handed my pension contributions back, mostly without interest and always without employer's contributions. Even so, it wasn't until I was approaching 40 that I thought: 'Hang on a minute, I'm half-way through my career and what pension have I got to show for it?'"

"My next job was as sales and marketing director for a company in the travel industry, and once again I was forced to contribute to its pension scheme. This time I resigned due to an intolerable boss. A week later, while I was still working out the notice on my 12-month contract, he fired me for gross misconduct so that he wouldn't have to pay me."

"I took legal action; won my case and got my pension handed back, but still with no employer's contribution, no interest, no nothing. By now I was 42 and I felt really cheated. Pension contributions are meant to be a tax-efficient investment, yet my employers had been taking that money, using it and getting the interest on it themselves."

"I've been working now from 1971 to 1996, and allowing for a year off to study - that's 24 years during which I should have built up a sizeable pension. After all, I was earning up to £70,000 a year."

"Instead, I lost a lot of money. The rate of inflation between 1976 and 1981 alone was fluctuating between 12 and 18 per cent, so even a return of 5 per cent would have been dishonest. It was daylight robbery and I was furious."

"The trouble is, when you're starting a new job you've got so many things to think about, like the salary, and whether you'll get on with your new boss. It's very difficult to ask what will happen to your contributions if you leave within two years because it wouldn't go down very well."

"Fortunately, one of the first reforms of the Thatcher era was the introduction of portable pensions. It was in recognition of the fact that times have changed: people do get made redundant, companies do get downsized, and if you haven't been there for two years you are in a vulnerable position. It was 1995 before I finally took out a private pension scheme, and now that I have, no company in the future will be able to force me to contribute to theirs."

"I've never been very good at investing money. I like earning it and spending it on things like houses, but I don't like the uncertainty of putting it where I can't see it. And I don't think I'm alone: even now that so many women are financially independent, we still don't give enough thought to our future security."

Other people, she says, should learn from her mistakes: "The fact is, you have to look after yourself, because nobody else is going to do it. If you are likely to move in less than two years, don't join a company pension scheme without seeing an independent financial adviser first."

"Make sure you take out a pension plan that suits your personal needs, and if you're still in your twenties, don't put it off. Do it now."

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Something extra from your cash dispenser

By Dido Sandler

Does your cash dispenser give you extra money absolutely free? If it's a NatWest branch hole in the wall, it probably does. From Monday money-off vouchers will accompany cash withdrawals at a thousand sites up and down the country.

First to emerge through the slot will be discount offers of up to £50 on Seafrance cross-channel ferries, and a promotion around the launch of the Walt Disney video include vouchers for large stores, manufacturers and assorted high profile brands.

This type of voucher system has been very successful in tests, with brands such as Sainsbury's, Coca Cola and Mars achieving redemption rates as high as 11 per cent. Comparable leaflet drops, by contrast, achieve only a 1-2 per cent response rate.

It's all about added value, says NatWest's marketing department - giving customers extra service from their cash till.

It's also about making

money for the bank - lots of it. They won't disclose how much - commercially sensitive information this.

Advertisers will be tempted by the opportunity to target specific areas or neighbourhoods, and in the long term, individuals who withdraw large amounts of cash. The bank says this would not invade customer privacy.

On the back of the vouchers there will be information about offers from the bank's own portfolio of financial services. Like its main rivals - Lloyds TSB, Midland and Barclays - NatWest is looking to maximise value from customers by cross-selling their products and services. The cash dispenser vouchers are just one of several ways.

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مكتبة الامم المتحدة

The final steps towards a happy retirement

So what do financial advisers actually do? Sort out bad investment advice, that's what. By Michael Royde

The first principle of providing independent financial advice is to establish the objectives of a client before recommending suitable investments. It is no good choosing an investment portfolio for growth if the client requires income.

Two couples came to see me recently: both were retired. The first couple were the parents of my whole-sale broker, Norman, who deals with a general business, ie house insurance. Norman's father is a member of Lloyd's of London, suffers from serious ill-health and lives in a nursing home. His mother has a shortfall of income because she has to pay the nursing home fees.

His parents have a portfolio between them of approximately £400,000, which is currently providing an income of £20,000. The stockbrokers who were looking after the portfolio had not

thought about the client's objectives. They were providing income out of the portfolio through a mixture of gilts and equities, which were taxed, and investing a portfolio of tax-free Personal Equity Plans (PEPs) for growth.

Similarly, the Lloyd's funds (the investments lodged with Lloyd's as security for possible losses) were oriented towards producing capital growth rather than income and hence were not making proper use of the ability to carry forward losses.

I proposed that the PEP portfolio should be switched to provide the highest possible income, producing an annual return of 10 per cent paid quarterly. I suggested that the portfolio of gilts be switched to a lifetime income bond bought from an insurance company, which increased the net yield by approximately 30 per cent.

The risks attached to the lifetime income bond, which is based solely on

War Loan, are the same as the gilt portfolio - they are rated AAA, but are slightly more volatile. With an increase in yield of 30 per cent net, the increased volatility is entirely justifiable.

It is obviously more sensible to select investments for PEPs to provide income rather than capital gains, because most people will pay no capital gains tax anyway, but will almost always be liable to pay income tax, either at basic rate of 25 per cent (24 per cent next tax year) or 40 per cent.

Again because Norman's father was a member of Lloyd's with some carry-forward losses it was better to switch his highest-yielding shares into his funds at Lloyd's in order to make full use of the losses and eliminate any tax liability from this source of income.

These simple changes increased the net income by over £5,000 per annum. There was some discussion as to whether he should remain a member

of Lloyd's, writing only on life or motor syndicates, in order to make use of the inheritance-tax exemptions that apply to funds at Lloyd's.

However, there is only any point in doing this if both the wills of the parents are correctly written, making use of the nil rate band together with funds at Lloyd's, which are regarded as business assets providing they are commensurate with the names' underwriting.

My next clients were Victor and his wife. He had recently retired from a job in the construction industry with a good pension. His investments had been looked after by one of the major clearing banks and they had managed to generate no capital gains whatsoever for the last five years. Victor had had some part-time consultancy, giving him an income of approximately £20,000 a year for the last few years, but this income was about to cease.

Victor and I spent several hours dis-

cussing his objectives and we agreed that the investment portfolio should be split into several parts.

The first part was to switch his general PEPs into a high-yield PEP, again yielding 10 per cent, payable quarterly. The funds invested in single company PEPs were re-invested in one of the water companies where the stockbroker felt there was a good prospect of dividend growth.

Rather than opting for the lifetime income bond, Victor chose a bond with a yield of 11 per cent (this yield has subsequently dropped to nearer 10 per cent), with the return of the original capital dependent on a modest level of growth from the UK and US markets. The balance of the middle third was made up of guaranteed stock market bonds for Japan and a number of unit trusts and investment trusts.

The third part of the portfolio was to be an investment in a residential

property in the area in which Victor lived, at a cost of around £100,000. Victor is currently looking at the market in his area through normal agents as well as examining the local auction houses.

In addition we used up his unused pension relief by using a small part of his capital for an immediate retirement annuity. Briefly he placed £20,000 into a pension plan. This entitled him to tax relief of £8,000. He immediately cashed the contract, returning him £5,000 tax-free cash. The net investment was £7,000 (£20,000 - £8,000 - £5,000), which purchased a joint life annuity of £1,500 per annum, giving a gross return of approximately 20 per cent.

It goes without saying that use was made of the wife's allowances and basic rate tax band.

I was pleased to be able to achieve both couples' objectives by increasing their income to meet their expenditure.

Building societies under pressure

By Clifford German

Prity the marketing departments of the building societies, fighting for advantage in a competitive market complicated by the struggle between mutual societies and those opting to become public companies.

The demand for new gimmicks and discounts has created an unprecedented range of products. Then there's the Chancellor's insistence on cutting base rates in quarter-point instalments - at a time when competitive pressures force lenders to respond to every change. Meanwhile savings packages have to be juggled to try to minimise the adverse impact of falling interest rates and retain as much existing business as possible.

Response to the latest cut in base rates was swift yesterday. Within an hour Halifax Building Society cut its standard variable mortgage rate from 7.49 per cent to 7.25 per cent immediately for new customers and from April 1 for 2.4 million exist-

ing borrowers. It means the interest on an average 25-year endowment mortgage of £60,000 will fall from £346.43 to £335.33 a month after tax relief, saving £11.10.

Abbey National has also cut its standard variable rate from 7.49 per cent to 7.24 per cent with effect from Monday for new borrowers and May 1 for existing borrowers. On a typical repayment mortgage of £60,000 it will reduce monthly payments from £426.51 to £417.62, a saving of £8.89 a month.

The Portman Building Society responded to the latest drop in base rates and the promise of further cuts to come by slashing the rate on new fee-free fixed-rate mortgages between now and May 1998 by a full percentage point to 4.99 per cent. Alternatively borrowers can opt to pay 5.99 per cent fixed until May 1998, with no redemption penalty if they decide to remortgage elsewhere or pay off their loan over the next three years.

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Birmingham Royal Ballet and
ley's Fox from the Washington
ambitious programming of French
Ballets de l'Opéra, Ashton's *Stravinsky*
and Robbins's *The Cage*. Theatre Royal
mouth, tonight. Same programme at
The Spring loaded with new
audiences. Next season brings the
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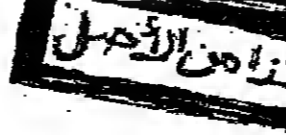
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 700 Staines, Alexandra Palace, tomorrow
 (01-81-983-7061)
 Southern County Antiques: Arley Hall, Knuts-
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 Surrey, tomorrow (01276-681808).
 Chiswick Castle Antiques: next Saturday
 Ruislip (01848-215323).

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The big picture

Hannah and Her Sisters

Sun 11.35pm BBC1

Michael Caine has had many more dramatic roles than the philandering husband in *Hannah and Her Sisters*, but few that showcase so well his understated but undeniable screen presence. As he struggles vainly against his lust for the sister of his wife (Mia Farrow), he succeeds in conjuring up a variety of emotions with the minimum of grandstanding gestures, in this, Allen's typically well-constructed ensemble comedy about sex and death in Manhattan.

It's called casting against type, and it's as good a way as any of kicking lazy casting directors up the pants. Last week we had *Birds of a Feather* Pauline Quilès as a murderer serving life in the excellent *The Sculptress*. This week it's that once Kevin Whately from *Inspector Morse* and *Peak Practice*, as a wife-beater. The occasion is Lucy Gannon's thoughtful shocker of a drama, *Trip Trap* (Sat BBC1), and coming to think of it, it was a Lucy Gannon drama, *Tender Loving Care*, that cast Dawn French as a nurse who was bumping off her patients. And, while we're still making connections, Gannon was also responsible for Whately's *Peak Practice*, not to mention *Soldier, Soldier* and *Brumwell*. Commissioning editors must camp out on her front lawn.

Whately is frighteningly believable as the harassed primary school headteacher given to breaking his wife's ribs as she reads in bed. And Stella Gonnard hands in a virtuoso performance as a woman trapped between self-loathing and a closed fist. It's the sort of drama that makes you wonder how many potentially abusive husbands-to-be are amongst the contestants on The

Shane Richie Experience (Sat 11pm). This, in case you missed the hoo-ha surrounding last year's pilot, is a game show for intending couples, the winning pair being married there and then on TV. Perhaps the idea could be extended to a game show for dissolving marriages - with the winning partner getting a quickie divorce and custody of the kids. Cynical? I'm only looking at the role models for those whose marriages have been televised in the past: Anne and Mark, Charles and Diana.

Remember *The Red Light Zone*, Channel 4's late night attempt (let's be charitable) to broaden the discussion of matters sexual on our TV screens. Their follow-up is called *The Blue Light Zone*, a season of programmes about the police, as if the TV schedules didn't already resemble the car park at New Scotland Yard. Actually, the only non-repeat amongst the four opening films is rather good. *Subway Cops and the Mole Kings* (Sat 4) goes on the beat with the NYPD officers responsible for policing the 5,000 souls who have made their homes in Manhattan's sewers and subways. Witness against Hitler (Sun BBC1), meanwhile,

stars James Wilby in the story of German aristocrat James von Moltke's brave opposition to the Nazis. It's all very worthy, but I have to admit to switching to remote here. I still remember the same territory covered by Dennis Potter's more interesting *Christmas*, the drama that gave the world a large and almost plump of one Elizabeth Hurley.

The *Nature's World* (Sun BBC2) looks at the wildlife that hangs out at one drought-stricken South African water-hole. Not another dwindling water-hole film, I hear you groan. Stick with it, it's all I can say. Apart from the fascinating Darwinian dynamics of the situation, there are moments of high anthropomorphic comedy. Witness the crocodiles biting their tongues rather than snap on the baby hippo who is feeding them around. Manya is watching, you see.

And still on the subject of carnivores and parasites, *Bookmark* (Sat BBC2) has a satisfying film about the (usually strained) relationship between biographer and subject, which neatly leaves the last word to Oscar Wilde, quoted here. "Every great man has his disciples, and it's always Judas who writes the biography."



The big match

Leeds United vs Liverpool

Sun 2.55pm BBC1

Leeds United, under the management of Howard Wilkinson, tipped by some as the next to succeed, are a formidable as an English team, and are ready to make the final of the FA Cup. Standing in their way in the FA Cup semi-finals is the formidable obstacle of Liverpool. Their good run is due to no small measure to the goal-scoring feats of Robbie Fowler (above, with Stan Collymore), who must surely be doing his very best to keep the English FA Cup out of the hands of the English FA Cup.

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

- 7.25 News; Weather (5718847).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: Inzougot, 7.45 The Artbox Bunch, 8.00 Inzougot, 8.10 The Flintstones, 8.35 The Addams Family.
- 9.00 Live and Kidding. Guests include Shane Richie, singer Louise, and Birmingham FC's managing director Karen Brady (S) (59413248).
- 12.12 Weather (2405847).
- 12.15 Grandstand, 12.20 Football Focus, 12.55 Racing from Cheltenham, 1.00 Weatherwise, 1.05 Leasing, 1.10 News, 1.15 Motor Racing: news of today's qualifying session for the Australian Grand Prix, 1.25 Racing from Cheltenham, 1.30 Bet with the Tote Novice Handicap Chase Final, 1.40 Athletics: The European Indoor Championships from Stockholm, including the final of the men's 60m hurdles and the women's 60m, 1.55 Racing from Cheltenham, 2.00 Beaufort Novice Hurdle, 2.10 Rugby League: Live coverage of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final match between St Helens and Widnes (kick off 2.15pm), 3.00 Athletics: 3.10 Rugby League: The second half of this afternoon's match, 3.50 Football Half-Times 4.00 Athletics, 4.40 Final Score (65191170).
- 5.20 News; Weather (5077002).
- 5.30 Local News, Weather (1175338).
- 5.35 Cartoon (287335).
- 5.45 Big Break, Snooker and general knowledge (S) (354335).
- 6.15 The New Adventures of Superman. Lois's ex-lover arrives in Metropolis (S) (373083).
- 7.00 Noel's House Party. A Catcha for Jeremy Clarkson (S) (861408).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live. Eternal perform their new single and help press the button (S) (740460).
- 8.05 Morecambe and Wise. John Mills in Ernest Wise's *Escape from Stalag 54* is amongst this compilation from the 1970s (S) (547460).
- 8.35 News and Sport; Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (712847).
- 9.00 Trip Trap. Kevin Whately gets nasty in Lucy Gannon's Screen One drama. See Preview, above (S) (9183).
- 10.30 Match of the Day - the Road to Wembley. Highlights of the 120th replay between Tottenham Hotspur and Nottingham Forest, and the sixth-round tie between Chelsea and Wimbledon (S) (649199).
- 11.40 Cricket World Cup. Highlights of the first two quarter-finals (S) (3537122).
- 12.50 *Eight Men Out* (Frank Zappa & Tony Palmer 1971 US). Yes, that's right: Zappa and Tony Palmer - a heavy band indeed, as they have fun with Zappa's touring schedules. Ringo Starr plays Zappa, and Keith Moon plays a nun (158749).
- 2.25 Weather (6512010). To 2.50am.

Radio

Radio 1

- 9.15-9.30am: 91.5-93.5MHz FM
- 7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00am Dave Pearce 12.30pm Danny Baker 2.30pm John Peel 5.00pm John Peel 7.00pm Lovegrove Dance Party with Danny Pampling 9.00pm Radio 1 Rap Show 12.40am Essential Mix: Pete Dinklage 2.00am Anne Nightingale's Chill Out Zone 4.00-7.00am Lynn Parsons

Radio 2

- 6.00am Mo Dutt 8.05am Brian Matthew 10.00am Vanessa Feltz 12.00pm Haynes on Saturday 1.30pm The Queen of Romance 2.00pm Martin Freeman on Saturday 4.00pm Nick Barraclough 5.00pm Clannad in Concert 6.00pm The Dick James Story 7.00pm The Story Behind... Jesus Christ Superstar 7.30pm Jesus Christ Superstar: Live from the West End 9.20pm David Jacobs 10.00pm Sheridan Money 12.05am Charles Nova 4.00-7.00am Mo Dutt

Radio 3

- 6.00am Record Review.
- 9.00am Building a Library. David Benedict embarks on a survey of music by Stephen Sondheim.
- 11.55am Record Review: Tartin: Violin Concerto in A. Kuhnau: Biblical Sonata No 2: The melancholy of David assaulted by means of music. Biben: Sonata No 6 in A. Bach: Cantata No 4: Christ lag in Todesbanden.
- 11.55am Reissues.
- 12.00am Private Passions. Michael Breckley talks to the Canadian writer, historian and journalist Michael Ignatieff about his favourite musical moments.
- 1.00am News, Cold War: Hot Science. Georgina Perry meets the scientists working in Britain in the Fifties who started to unlock the secrets of deep space. (2x)
- 1.20am Vintage Years. Richard Wigmore explores the life of contemporary Alfred Heller. (1x)
- 3.20am The Classical Academy. Owen Murray explores the life of composer John Field. (1x)
- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.



Choice

Owen Murray spearheads the advent of the Classical Accordion (3.20pm R3), with selections from Messiaen's great organ cycle *La Navraie*. Wizard whizzers, eh? Also a potential wizard whizzers (left): Julian Clary as Herod in a new recording of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (7.30pm R2), with Roger Daltrey and Tony Hadley.

- 11.00am (FM) News; The Week in Westminster. Kite, Shostakovich: Incidental music; King Lear.
- 5.00am Jazz Record Requests.
- 5.45am Music Matters. Ivan Hewett reports on the Opera Company version of Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise*.
- 6.30am Nikolai Demidenko (piano). Schumann: Papillons, Op 2; Des Abends, Aufschwing, Beethoven, arr Liszt; Sonata in A flat, Op 10.10.
- 7.30am Live from the Teatro del Opera, Rome. Messiaen's tragic version opera. Cast includes Nicola Ghislanzoni, bass (Il Ciochi), Daniela Dessi, soprano (Ira), Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra/Gianluigi Gelmetti. Act 1. (B-25-B-45 The Cavallina Man.) Act 2. (9.00-9.20 Italian Encounters.) Act 3.
- 10.30am Best Words. Michael Rosen introduces the latest news from the world of poetry.
- 11.00am Kathryn Stott (piano). Chopin: Ballades in G minor, Op 23 No 1; in F, Op 38 No 2.
- 11.20am Five from the Fifties.
- 11.25-1.00am Caribbean Jazz Project. A group led by Cuban alto saxophonist Perito D'Rivera and two founding members of Snyro Orya, Dave Samuels and Andy Narell. Recorded at the Blue Note Club, New York.
- 5.55-7.00am Open University.
- 12.40am (FM) News; Local Ends.
- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Radio 4

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Radio 5

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Satellite

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Sky One

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Sky Movies

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

Sky Sports

- 6.00am News Briefing.
- 6.10am Farming Today.
- 6.55am Prayer for the Day.
- 7.00am Today.
- 6.58am Weather.
- 9.00am (FM) News.
- 9.00am (FM) Cricket World Cup. Live coverage of the second quarter-final from Bangalore, India.
- 9.05am (FM) Sport on 4.
- 9.30am (FM) Breakfast.
- 10.00am (FM) News; Local Ends.

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